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THE

WORKS

OF

LORD BYRON.

A New Edition.

EDITED BY

THOMAS MOORE, ESQ.

COMPLETE IN FOUR VOLUMES.

WITH ENGRAVINGS.

VOL. II.

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MANFRED,

A

DRAMATIC POEM.

"There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy."

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MANFRED.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

MANFRED *alone.* — *Scene, a Gothic Gallery.* — *Time, Midnight.*

Man. THE lamp must be replenish'd, but even then
It will not burn so long as I must watch:
My slumbers — if I slumber — are not sleep,
But a continuance of enduring thought,
Which then I can resist not: in my heart
There is a vigil, and these eyes but close
To look within; and yet I live, and bear
The aspect and the form of breathing men.
But grief should be the instructor of the wise;
Sorrow is knowledge: they who know the most
Must mourn the deepest o'er the fatal truth,
The Tree of Knowledge is not that of Life.
Philosophy and science, and the springs
Of wonder, and the wisdom of the world,
I have essay'd, and in my mind there is
A power to make these subject to itself —
But they avail not: I have done men good,
And I have met with good even among men —
But this avail'd not: I have had my foes,
And none have baffled, many fallen before me —
But this avail'd not: — Good, or evil, life,
Powers, passions, all I see in other beings,
Have been to me as rain unto the sands,
Since that all-nameless hour. I have no dread,
And feel the curse to have no natural fear,
Nor fluttering throb, that beats with hopes or wishes,
Or lurking love of something on the earth. —
Now to my task. —

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Mysterious Agency!
Ye spirits of the unbounded Universe!
Whom I have sought in darkness and in light —
Ye, who do compass earth about, and dwell
In subtler essence — ye, to whom the tops
Of mountains inaccessible are haunts,
And earth's and ocean's caves familiar things —
I call upon ye by the written charm
Which gives me power upon you —— Rise! appear!
[*A pause.*
They come not yet. — Now by the voice of him
Who is the first among you — by this sign,
Which makes you tremble — by the claims of him
Who is undying, — Rise! appear! —— Appear!
[*A pause.*
If it be so. — Spirits of earth and air,
Ye shall not thus elude me: by a power,
Deeper than all yet urged, a tyrant-spell,
Which had its birthplace in a star condemn'd,
The burning wreck of a demolish'd world,
A wandering hell in the eternal space;
By the strong curse which is upon my soul,
The thought which is within me and around me,
I do compel ye to my will. — Appear!

[*A star is seen at the darker end of the gallery; it is stationary; and a voice is heard singing.*

FIRST SPIRIT.

Mortal! to thy bidding bow'd,
From my mansion in the cloud,
Which the breath of twilight builds,
And the summer's sunset gilds
With the azure and vermilion,
Which is mix'd for my pavilion;
Though thy quest may be forbidden,
On a star-beam I have ridden;
To thine adjuration bow'd,
Mortal — be thy wish avow'd!

Voice of the SECOND SPIRIT.

Mont Blanc is the monarch of mountains;
They crown'd him long ago
On a throne of rocks, in a robe of clouds,
With a diadem of snow.

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Around his waist are forests braced,
The Avalanche in his hand;
But ere it fall, that thundering ball
Must pause for my command.
The Glacier's cold and restless mass
Moves onward day by day;
But I am he who bids it pass,
Or with its ice delay.
I am the spirit of the place,
Could make the mountain bow
And quiver to his cavern'd base —
And what with me wouldst *Thou?*

Voice of the THIRD SPIRIT.

In the blue depth of the waters,
Where the wave hath no strife,
Where the wind is a stranger,
And the sea-snake hath life,
Where the mermaid is decking
Her green hair with shells;
Like the storm on the surface
Came the sound of thy spells;
O'er my calm Hall of Coral
The deep echo roll'd —
To the Spirit of Ocean
Thy wishes unfold!

FOURTH SPIRIT.

Where the slumbering earthquake
Lies pillow'd on fire,
And the lakes of bitumen
Rise boilingly higher;
Where the roots of the Andes
Strike deep in the earth,
As their summits to heaven
Shoot soaringly forth;
I have quitted my birthplace,
Thy bidding to bide —
Thy spell hath subdued me,
Thy will be my guide!

FIFTH SPIRIT.

I am the Rider of the wind,
The Stirrer of the storm;
The hurricane I left behind
Is yet with lightning warm;

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To speed to thee, o'er shore and sea
I swept upon the blast:
The fleet I met sail'd well, and yet
'T will sink ere night be past.

SIXTH SPIRIT.

My dwelling is the shadow of the night,
Why doth thy magic torture me with light?

SEVENTH SPIRIT.

The star which rules thy destiny
Was ruled, ere earth began, by me:
I was a world as fresh and fair
As e'er revolved round sun in air;
Its course was free and regular,
Space bosom'd not a lovelier star.
The hour arrived — and it became
A wandering mass of shapeless flame,
A pathless comet, and a curse,
The menace of the universe;
Still rolling on with innate force,
Without a sphere, without a course,
A bright deformity on high,
The monster of the upper sky!
And thou! beneath its influence born —
Thou worm! whom I obey and scorn —
Forced by a power (which is not thine,
And lent thee but to make thee mine)
For this brief moment to descend,
Where these weak spirits round thee bend
And parley with a thing like thee —
What wouldst thou, Child of Clay! with me?

The SEVEN SPIRITS.

Earth, ocean, air, night, mountains, winds, thy star,
Are at thy beck and bidding, Child of Clay!
Before thee at thy quest their spirits are —
What wouldst thou with us, son of mortals — say?

Man. Forgetfulness ——
First Spirit. Of what — of whom — and why
Man. Of that which is within me; read it there —
Ye know it, and I cannot utter it.
Spirit. We can but give thee that which we possess:
Ask of us subjects, sovereignty, the power

O'er earth, the whole, or portion, or a sign
Which shall control the elements, whereof
We are the dominators, each and all,
These shall be thine.
Man. Oblivion, self-oblivion —
Can ye not wring from out the hidden realms
Ye offer so profusely what I ask?
Spirit. It is not in our essence, in our skill;
But — thou mayst die.
Man. Will death bestow it on me?
Spirit. We are immortal, and do not forget;
We are eternal; and to us the past
Is, as the future, present. Art thou answer'd?
Man. Ye mock me — but the power which brought ye here
Hath made you mine. Slaves, scoff not at my will!
The mind, the spirit, the Promethean spark,
The lightning of my being, is as bright,
Pervading, and far-darting as your own,
And shall not yield to yours, though coop'd in clay!
Answer, or I will teach ye what I am.
Spirit. We answer as we answer'd; our reply
Is even in thine own words.
Man. Why say ye so?
Spirit. If, as thou say'st, thine essence be as ours
We have replied in telling thee, the thing
Mortals call death hath nought to do with us.
Man. I then have call'd ye from your realms in vain;
Ye cannot, or ye will not, aid me.
Spirit. Say;
What we possess we offer; it is thine:
Bethink ere thou dismiss us, ask again —
Kingdom, and sway, and strength, and length of days ——
Man. Accursed! what have I to do with days?
They are too long already.— Hence — begone!
Spirit. Yet pause: being here, our will would do thee service;
Bethink thee, is there then no other gift
Which we can make not worthless in thine eyes?
Man. No, none: yet stay — one moment, ere we part —
I would behold ye face to face. I hear
Your voices, sweet and melancholy sounds,
As music on the waters; and I see
The steady aspect of a clear large star;
But nothing more. Approach me as ye are,
Or one, or all, in your accustom'd forms.

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Spirit. We have no forms, beyond the elements
Of which we are the mind and principle:
But choose a form — in that we will appear.
Man. I have no choice; there is no form on earth
Hideous or beautiful to me. Let him,
Who is most powerful of ye, take such aspect
As unto him may seem most fitting — Come!
Seventh Spirit. (*Appearing in the shape of a beautiful female figure.*) Behold!
Man. Oh God! if it be thus, and *thou*
Art not a madness and a mockery,
I yet might be most happy. I will clasp thee,
And we again will be —— [*The figure vanishes.*
My heart is crush'd!
[MANFRED *falls senseless.*

(*A voice is heard in the Incantation which follows.*)

When the moon is on the wave,
And the glow-worm in the grass,
And the meteor on the grave,
And the wisp on the morass;
When the falling stars are shooting,
And the answer'd owls are hooting,
And the silent leaves are still
In the shadow of the hill,
Shall my soul be upon thine,
With a power and with a sign.

Though thy slumber may be deep,
Yet thy spirit shall not sleep;
There are shades which will not vanish,
There are thoughts thou canst not banish;
By a power to thee unknown,
Thou canst never be alone;
Thou art wrapt as with a shroud,
Thou art gather'd in a cloud;
And for ever shalt thou dwell
In the spirit of this spell.

Though thou seest me not pass by,
Thou shalt feel me with thine eye
As a thing that, though unseen,
Must be near thee, and hath been;
And when in that secret dread
Thou hast turn'd around thy head,

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Thou shalt marvel I am not
As thy shadow on the spot,
And the power which thou dost feel
Shall be what thou must conceal.

And a magic voice and verse
Hath baptized thee with a curse;
And a spirit of the air
Hath begirt thee with a snare;
In the wind there is a voice
Shall forbid thee to rejoice;
And to thee shall Night deny
All the quiet of her sky;
And the day shall have a sun,
Which shall make thee wish it done.

From thy false tears I did distil
An essence which hath strength to kill;
From thy own heart I then did wring
The black blood in its blackest spring;
From thy own smile I snatch'd the snake,
For there it coil'd as in a brake;
From thy own lip I drew the charm
Which gave all these their chiefest harm;
In proving every poison known,
I found the strongest was thine own.

By thy cold breast and serpent smile,
By thy unfathom'd gulfs of guile,
By that most seeming virtuous eye,
By thy shut soul's hypocrisy;
By the perfection of thine art
Which pass'd for human thine own heart;
By thy delight in others' pain,
And by thy brotherhood of Cain,
I call upon thee! and compel
Thyself to be thy proper Hell!

And on thy head I pour the vial
Which doth devote thee to this trial;
Nor to slumber, nor to die,
Shall be in thy destiny;
Though thy death shall still seem near
To thy wish, but as a fear;

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Lo! the spell now works around thee,
And the clankless chain hath bound thee;
O'er thy heart and brain together
Hath the word been pass'd — now wither!

SCENE II.

The Mountain of the Jungfrau. — Time, Morning. — MANFRED *alone upon the Cliffs.*

Man. The spirits I have raised abandon me —
The spells which I have studied baffle me —
The remedy I reck'd of tortured me;
I lean no more on super-human aid,
It hath no power upon the past, and for
The future, till the past be gulf'd in darkness,
It is not of my search. — My mother Earth!
And thou fresh breaking Day, and you, ye Mountains,
Why are ye beautiful? I cannot love ye.
And thou, the bright eye of the universe,
That openest over all, and unto all
Art a delight — thou shin'st not on my heart.
And you, ye crags, upon whose extreme edge
I stand, and on the torrent's brink beneath
Behold the tall pines dwindled as to shrubs
In dizziness of distance; when a leap,
A stir, a motion, even a breath, would bring
My breast upon its rocky bosom's bed
To rest for ever — wherefore do I pause?
I feel the impulse — yet I do not plunge;
I see the peril — yet do not recede;
And my brain reels — and yet my foot is firm:
There is a power upon me which withholds,
And makes it my fatality to live;
If it be life to wear within myself
This barrenness of spirit, and to be
My own soul's sepulchre, for I have ceased
To justify my deeds unto myself —
The last infirmity of evil. Ay,
Thou winged and cloud-cleaving minister,

[*An eagle passes.*

Whose happy flight is highest into heaven,
Well may'st thou swoop so near me — I should be
Thy prey, and gorge thine eaglets; thou art gone
Where the eye cannot follow thee; but thine
Yet pierces downward, onward, or above,

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With a pervading vision. — Beautiful!
How beautiful is all this visible world!
How glorious in its action and itself!
But we, who name ourselves its sovereigns, we,
Half dust, half deity, alike unfit
To sink or soar, with our mix'd essence make
A conflict of its elements, and breathe
The breath of degradation and of pride,
Contending with low wants and lofty will,
Till our mortality predominates,
And men are — what they name not to themselves,
And trust not to each other. Hark! the note,
[*The Shepherd's pipe in the distance is heard*
The natural music of the mountain reed —
For here the patriarchal days are not
A pastoral fable — pipes in the liberal air,
Mix'd with the sweet bells of the sauntering herd;
My soul would drink those echoes. — Oh, that I were
The viewless spirit of a lovely sound,
A living voice, a breathing harmony,
A bodiless enjoyment — born and dying
With the blest tone which made me!

Enter from below a CHAMOIS HUNTER.

Chamois Hunter. Even so
This way the chamois leapt: her nimble feet
Have baffled me; my gains to-day will scarce
Repay my break-neck travail. — What is here?
Who seems not of my trade, and yet hath reach'd
A height which none even of our mountaineers,
Save our best hunters, may attain: his garb
Is goodly, his mien manly, and his air
Proud as a free-born peasant's, at this distance —
I will approach him nearer.

Man. (*not perceiving the other.*) To be thus —
Gray-hair'd with anguish, like these blasted pines,
Wrecks of a single winter, barkless, branchless,
A blighted trunk upon a cursed root,
Which but supplies a feeling to decay —
And to be thus, eternally but thus,
Having been otherwise! Now furrow'd o'er
With wrinkles, plough'd by moments, not by years
And hours — all tortured into ages — hours
Which I outlive! — Ye toppling crags of ice!
Ye avalanches, whom a breath draws down

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In mountainous o'erwhelming, come and crush me!
I hear ye momently above, beneath,
Crash with a frequent conflict; but ye pass,
And only fall on things that still would live;
On the young flourishing forest, or the hut
And hamlet of the harmless villager.

C. Hun. The mists begin to rise from up the valley;
I 'll warn him to descend, or he may chance
To lose at once his way and life together.

Man. The mists boil up around the glaciers; clouds
Rise curling fast beneath me, white and sulphury,
Like foam from the roused ocean of deep Hell,
Whose every wave breaks on a living shore,
Heap'd with the damn'd like pebbles. — I am giddy.

C. Hun. I must approach him cautiously; if near,
A sudden step will startle him, and he
Seems tottering already.

Man. Mountains have fallen,
Leaving a gap in the clouds, and with the shock
Rocking their Alpine brethren; filling up
The ripe green valleys with destruction's splinters;
Damming the rivers with a sudden dash,
Which crush'd the waters into mist, and made
Their fountains find another channel — thus,
Thus, in its old age, did Mount Rosenberg —
Why stood I not beneath it?

C. Hun. Friend! have a care,
Your next step may be fatal! — for the love
Of him who made you, stand not on that brink!

Man. (*not hearing him.*) Such would have been for me
a fitting tomb;
My bones had then been quiet in their depth;
They had not then been strewn upon the rocks
For the wind's pastime — as thus — thus they shall be —
In this one plunge. — Farewell, ye opening heavens!
Look not upon me thus reproachfully —
Ye were not meant for me — Earth! take these atoms!

[*As* MANFRED *is in act to spring from the cliff, the* CHAMOIS HUNTER *seizes and retains him with a sudden grasp.*

C. Hun. Hold, madman! — though aweary of thy life,
Stain not our pure vales with thy guilty blood —
Away with me —— I will not quit my hold.

Man. I am most sick at heart — nay, grasp me not —
I am all feebleness — the mountains whirl
Spinning around me —— I grow blind —— What art thou?

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C. Hun. I 'll answer that anon. — Away with me —
The clouds grow thicker —— there — now lean on me —
Place your foot here — here, take this staff, and cling
A moment to that shrub — now give me your hand,
And hold fast by my girdle — softly — well —
The Chalet will be gained within an hour —
Come on, we 'll quickly find a surer footing,
And something like a pathway, which the torrent
Hath wash'd since winter. — Come, 't is bravely done —
You should have been a hunter. — Follow me.

[*As they descend the rocks with difficulty, the scene closes.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.

A Cottage amongst the Bernese Alps.

MANFRED *and the* CHAMOIS HUNTER.

C. Hun. No, no — yet pause — thou must not yet go forth:
Thy mind and body are alike unfit
To trust each other, for some hours, at least;
When thou art better, I will be thy guide —
But whither?

Man. It imports not: I do know
My route full well, and need no further guidance.

C. Hun. Thy garb and gait bespeak thee of high lineage —
One of the many chiefs, whose castled crags
Look o'er the lower valleys — which of these
May call thee lord? I only know their portals;
My way of life leads me but rarely down
To bask by the huge hearths of those old halls,
Carousing with the vassals; but the paths,
Which step from out our mountains to their doors,
I know from childhood — which of these is thine?

Man. No matter.

C. Hun. Well, sir, pardon me the question,
And be of better cheer. Come, taste my wine;
'T is of an ancient vintage; many a day
'T has thawed my veins among our glaciers, now
Let it do thus for thine — Come, pledge me fairly.

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Man. Away, away! there 's blood upon the brim!
Will it then never — never sink in the earth?
C. Hun. What dost thou mean? thy senses wander from thee.
Man. I say 't is blood — my blood! the pure warm stream
Which ran in the veins of my fathers, and in ours
When we were in our youth, and had one heart,
And loved each other as we should not love,
And this was shed: but still it rises up,
Colouring the clouds, that shut me out from heaven,
Where thou art not — and I shall never be.
C. Hun. Man of strange words, and some half-maddening sin,
Which makes thee people vacancy, whate'er
Thy dread and sufferance be, there 's comfort yet —
The aid of holy men, and heavenly patience ——
Man. Patience and patience! Hence — that word was made
For brutes of burthen, not for birds of prey;
Preach it to mortals of a dust like thine, —
I am not of thine order.
C. Hun. Thanks to heaven!
I would not be of thine for the free fame
Of William Tell; but whatsoe'er thine ill,
It must be borne, and these wild starts are useless.
Man. Do I not bear it? — Look on me — I live.
C. Hun. This is convulsion, and no healthful life.
Man. I tell thee, man! I have lived many years,
Many long years, but they are nothing now
To those which I must number: ages — ages —
Space and eternity — and consciousness,
With the fierce thirst of death — and still unslaked!
C. Hun. Why, on thy brow the seal of middle age
Hath scarce been set; I am thine elder far.
Man. Think'st thou existence doth depend on time?
It doth; but actions are our epochs: mine
Have made my days and nights imperishable,
Endless, and all alike, as sands on the shore,
Innumerable atoms; and one desert,
Barren and cold, on which the wild waves break,
But nothing rests, save carcasses and wrecks,
Rocks, and the salt-surf weeds of bitterness.
C. Hun. Alas! he 's mad — but yet I must not leave him.
Man. I would I were — for then the things I see
Would be but a distemper'd dream.

C. Hun. What is it
That thou dost see, or think thou look'st upon?
Man. Myself, and thee — a peasant of the Alps —
Thy humble virtues, hospitable home,
And spirit patient, pious, proud, and free;
Thy self-respect, grafted on innocent thoughts;
Thy days of health, and nights of sleep; thy toils,
By danger dignified, yet guiltless; hopes
Of cheerful old age and a quiet grave,
With cross and garland over its green turf,
And thy grandchildren's love for epitaph;
This do I see — and then I look within —
It matters not — my soul was scorch'd already! [mine?
C. Hun. And would'st thou then exchange thy lot for
Man. No, friend! I would not wrong thee, nor exchange
My lot with living being: I can bear —
However wretchedly, 't is still to bear —
In life what others could not brook to dream,
But perish in their slumber.
C. Hun. And with this —
This cautious feeling for another's pain,
Canst thou be black with evil? — say not so.
Can one of gentle thoughts have wreak'd revenge
Upon his enemies?
Man. Oh! no, no, no!
My injuries came down on those who loved me —
On those whom I best loved: I never quell'd
An enemy, save in my just defence —
But my embrace was fatal.
C. Hun. Heaven give thee rest!
And penitence restore thee to thyself;
My prayers shall be for thee.
Man. I need them not,
But can endure thy pity. I depart —
'T is time — farewell! — Here 's gold and thanks for thee —
No words — it is thy due. — Follow me not —
I know my path — the mountain peril 's past:
And once again, I charge thee, follow not! [*Exit* MAN

SCENE II.

A lower Valley in the Alps. A Cataract.

Enter MANFRED.

It is not noon — the sunbow's rays (1) still arch
The torrent with the many hues of heaven,

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(1) This iris is formed by the rays of the sun over the lower part of the Alpine

And roll the sheeted silver's waving column
O'er the crag's headlong perpendicular,
And fling its lines of foaming light along,
And to and fro, like the pale courser's tail,
The Giant steed, to be bestrode by Death,
As told in the Apocalypse. No eyes
But mine now drink this sight of loveliness;
I should be sole in this sweet solitude,
And with the Spirit of the place divide
The homage of these waters.— I will call her.

[MANFRED *takes some of the water into the palm of his hand, and flings it into the air, muttering the adjuration. After a pause, the* WITCH OF THE ALPS *rises beneath the arch of the sunbow of the torrent.*

Beautiful Spirit! with thy hair of light,
And dazzling eyes of glory, in whose form
The charms of earth's least mortal daughters grow
To an unearthly stature, in an essence
Of purer elements; while the hues of youth,—
Carnation'd like a sleeping infant's cheek,
Rock'd by the beating of her mother's heart,
Or the rose tints, which summer's twilight leaves
Upon the lofty glacier's virgin snow,
The blush of earth embracing with her heaven,—
Tinge thy celestial aspect, and make tame
The beauties of the sunbow which bends o'er thee.
Beautiful Spirit! in thy calm clear brow,
Wherein is glass'd serenity of soul,
Which of itself shows immortality,
I read that thou wilt pardon to a Son
Of Earth, whom the abstruser powers permit
At times to commune with them — if that he
Avail him of his spells — to call thee thus,
And gaze on thee a moment.

Witch. Son of Earth!
I know thee, and the powers which give thee power;
I know thee for a man of many thoughts,
And deeds of good and ill, extreme in both,
Fatal and fated in thy sufferings.
I have expected this — what would'st thou with me?

Man. To look upon thy beauty — nothing further.
The face of the earth hath madden'd me, and I
Take refuge in her mysteries, and pierce
To the abodes of those who govern her—

torrents: it is exactly like a rainbow come down to pay a visit, and so close that you may walk into it: — this effect lasts till noon.

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But they can nothing aid me. I have sought
From them what they could not bestow, and now
I search no further.

Witch. What could be the quest
Which is not in the power of the most powerful,
The rulers of the invisible?

Man. A boon;
But why should I repeat it? 't were in vain.

Witch. I know not that; let thy lips utter it.

Man. Well, though it torture me, 't is but the same;
My pang shall find a voice. From my youth upwards
My spirit walk'd not with the souls of men,
Nor look'd upon the earth with human eyes;
The thirst of their ambition was not mine,
The aim of their existence was not mine;
My joys, my griefs, my passions, and my powers,
Made me a stranger; though I wore the form,
I had no sympathy with breathing flesh,
Nor midst the creatures of clay that girded me
Was there but one who —— but of her anon.
I said with men, and with the thoughts of men,
I held but slight communion; but instead,
My joy was in the Wilderness, to breathe
The difficult air of the iced mountain's top,
Where the birds dare not build, nor insect's wing
Flit o'er the herbless granite; or to plunge
Into the torrent, and to roll along
On the swift whirl of the new breaking wave
Of river-stream, or ocean, in their flow.
In these my early strength exulted; or
To follow through the night the moving moon,
The stars and their development; or catch
The dazzling lightnings till my eyes grew dim;
Or to look, list'ning, on the scatter'd leaves,
While Autumn winds were at their evening song.
These were my pastimes, and to be alone;
For if the beings, of whom I was one, —
Hating to be so, — cross'd me in my path,
I felt myself degraded back to them,
And was all clay again. And then I dived,
In my lone wanderings, to the caves of death,
Searching its cause in its effect; and drew
From wither'd bones, and skulls, and heap'd up dust,
Conclusions most forbidden. Then I pass'd
The nights of years in sciences untaught,
Save in the old time; and with time and toil,

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And terrible ordeal, and such penance
As in itself hath power upon the air,
And spirits that do compass air and earth,
Space, and the peopled infinite, I made
Mine eyes familiar with Eternity,
Such as, before me, did the Magi, and
He who from out their fountain dwellings raised
Eros and Anteros, (1) at Gadara,
As I do thee; — and with my knowledge grew
The thirst of knowledge, and the power and joy
Of this most bright intelligence, until ——

Witch. Proceed.

Man. Oh! I but thus prolong'd my words
Boasting these idle attributes, because
As I approach the core of my heart's grief —
But to my task. I have not named to thee
Father or mother, mistress, friend, or being,
With whom I wore the chain of human ties;
If I had such, they seem'd not such to me —
Yet there was one ——

Witch. Spare not thyself — proceed.

Man. She was like me in lineaments — her eyes,
Her hair, her features, all, to the very tone
Even of her voice, they said were like to mine;
But soften'd all, and temper'd into beauty;
She had the same lone thoughts and wanderings,
The quest of hidden knowledge, and a mind
To comprehend the universe: nor these
Alone, but with them gentler powers than mine,
Pity, and smiles, and tears — which I had not;
And tenderness — but that I had for her;
Humility — and that I never had.
Her faults were mine — her virtues were her own —
I loved her, and destroy'd her!

Witch. With thy hand?

Man. Not with my hand, but heart — which broke her heart —
It gazed on mine, and wither'd. I have shed
Blood, but not hers — and yet her blood was shed —
I saw — and could not stanch it.

Witch. And for this —
A being of the race thou dost despise,
The order which thine own would rise above,
Mingling with us and ours, thou dost forego

(1) The philosopher Iamblicus. The story of the raising of Eros and Anteros may be found in his life by Eunapius. It is well told.

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The gifts of our great knowledge, and shrink'st back
To recreant mortality —— Away!

Man. Daughter of Air! I tell thee, since that hour —
But words are breath — look on me in my sleep,
Or watch my watchings — Come and sit by me!
My solitude is solitude no more,
But peopled with the Furies; — I have gnash'd
My teeth in darkness till returning morn,
Then cursed myself till sunset; — I have pray'd
For madness as a blessing — 't is denied me.
I have affronted death — but in the war
Of elements the waters shrunk from me,
And fatal things pass'd harmless — the cold hand
Of an all-pitiless demon held me back,
Back by a single hair, which would not break.
In fantasy, imagination, all
The affluence of my soul — which one day was
A Crœsus in creation — I plunged deep,
But, like an ebbing wave, it dash'd me back
Into the gulf of my unfathom'd thought.
I plunged amidst mankind — Forgetfulness
I sought in all, save where 't is to be found,
And that I have to learn — my sciences,
My long pursued and super-human art,
Is mortal here — I dwell in my despair —
And live — and live for ever.

Witch. It may be
That I can aid thee.

Man. To do this thy power
Must wake the dead, or lay me low with them.
Do so — in any shape — in any hour —
With any torture — so it be the last.

Witch. That is not in my province; but if thou
Wilt swear obedience to my will, and do
My bidding, it may help thee to thy wishes.

Man. I will not swear — Obey! and whom? the spirits
Whose presence I command, and be the slave
Of those who served me — Never!

Witch. Is this all?
Hast thou no gentler answer? — Yet bethink thee,
And pause ere thou rejectest.

Man. I have said it.

Witch. Enough! — I may retire then — say!

Man. Retire!

[*The* WITCH *disappears.*

Man. (*alone.*) We are the fools of time and terror: Days

Steal on us and steal from us; yet we live,
Loathing our life, and dreading still to die.
In all the days of this detested yoke —
This vital weight upon the struggling heart,
Which sinks with sorrow, or beats quick with pain,
Or joy that ends in agony or faintness —
In all the days of past and future, for
In life there is no present, we can number
How few — how less than few — wherein the soul
Forbears to pant for death, and yet draws back
As from a stream in winter, though the chill
Be but a moment's. I have one resource
Still in my science — I can call the dead,
And ask them what it is we dread to be:
The sternest answer can but be the Grave,
And that is nothing — if they answer not —
The buried Prophet answer'd to the Hag
Of Endor; and the Spartan Monarch drew
From the Byzantine maid's unsleeping spirit
An answer and his destiny — he slew
That which he loved, unknowing what he slew,
And died unpardon'd — though he call'd in aid
The Phyxian Jove, and in Phigalia roused
The Arcadian Evocators to compel
The indignant shadow to depose her wrath,
Or fix her term of vengeance — she replied
In words of dubious import, but fulfilled. (1)
If I had never lived, that which I love
Had still been living; had I never loved,
That which I love would still be beautiful —
Happy and giving happiness. What is she?
What is she now? — a sufferer for my sins —
A thing I dare not think upon — or nothing.
Within few hours I shall not call in vain —
Yet in this hour I dread the thing I dare:
Until this hour I never shrunk to gaze
On spirit, good or evil — now I tremble,
And feel a strange cold thaw upon my heart.
But I can act even what I most abhor,
And champion human fears.— The night approaches.

[*Exit.*

(1) The story of Pausanias, king of Sparta, (who commanded the Greeks at the battle of Platea, and afterwards perished for an attempt to betray the Lacedemonians,) and Cleonice, is told in Plutarch's life of Cimon; and in the Laconics of Pausanias the sophist, in his description of Greece.

SCENE III.

The Summit of the Jungfrau Mountain.

Enter FIRST DESTINY.

The moon is rising broad, and round, and bright;
And here on snows, where never human foot
Of common mortal trod, we nightly tread,
And leave no traces; o'er the savage sea,
The glassy ocean of the mountain ice,
We skim its rugged breakers, which put on
The aspect of a tumbling tempest's foam,
Frozen in a moment — a dead whirlpool's image:
And this most steep fantastic pinnacle,
The fretwork of some earthquake — where the clouds
Pause to repose themselves in passing by —
Is sacred to our revels, or our vigils;
Here do I wait my sisters, on our way
To the Hall of Arimanes, for to-night
Is our great festival — 't is strange they come not.

A Voice without, singing.

The Captive Usurper,
Hurl'd down from the throne,
Lay buried in torpor,
Forgotten and lone;
I broke through his slumbers,
I shiver'd his chain,
I leagued him with numbers —
He 's Tyrant again!
With the blood of a million he 'll answer my care,
With a nation's destruction — his flight and despair.

Second Voice, without.

The ship sail'd on, the ship sail'd fast,
But I left not a sail, and I left not a mast;
There is not a plank of the hull or the deck,
And there is not a wretch to lament o'er his wreck;
Save one, whom I held, as he swam, by the hair,
And he was a subject well worthy my care;
A traitor on land, and a pirate at sea —
But I saved him to wreak further havoc for me!

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FIRST DESTINY, *answering*.

The city lies sleeping;
The morn, to deplore it,
May dawn on it weeping:
Sullenly, slowly,
The black plague flew o'er it —
Thousands lie lowly;
Tens of thousands shall perish —
The living shall fly from
The sick they should cherish;
But nothing can vanquish
The touch that they die from.
Sorrow and anguish,
And evil and dread,
Envelope a nation —
The blest are the dead,
Who see not the sight
Of their own desolation —
This work of a night —
This wreck of a realm — this deed of my doing —
For ages I 've done, and shall still be renewing!

Enter the SECOND *and* THIRD DESTINIES.

The Three.

Our hands contain the hearts of men,
Our footsteps are their graves;
We only give to take again
The spirits of our slaves!

First Des. Welcome! — Where 's Nemesis?
Second Des. At some great work;
But what I know not, for my hands were full.
Third Des. Behold she cometh.

Enter NEMESIS.

First Des. Say, where hast thou been?
My sisters and thyself are slow to-night.
Nem. I was detain'd repairing shatter'd thrones,
Marrying fools, restoring dynasties,
Avenging men upon their enemies,
And making them repent their own revenge;
Goading the wise to madness; from the dull
Shaping out oracles to rule the world
Afresh, for they were waxing out of date,
And mortals dared to ponder for themselves,

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To weigh kings in the balance, and to speak
Of freedom, the forbidden fruit. — Away!
We have outstayed the hour — mount we our clouds!
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.

The Hall of Arimanes — Arimanes on his Throne, a Globe of Fire, surrounded by the Spirits.

Hymn of the SPIRITS.

Hail to our Master! — Prince of Earth and Air!
Who walks the clouds and waters — in his hand
The sceptre of the elements, which tear
Themselves to chaos at his high command!
He breatheth — and a tempest shakes the sea;
He speaketh — and the clouds reply in thunder;
He gazeth — from his glance the sunbeams flee;
He moveth — earthquakes rend the world asunder.
Beneath his footsteps the volcanoes rise;
His shadow is the Pestilence; his path
The comets herald through the crackling skies;
And planets turn to ashes at his wrath.
To him War offers daily sacrifice;
To him Death pays his tribute; Life is his,
With all its infinite of agonies —
And his the spirit of whatever is!

Enter the DESTINIES *and* NEMESIS.

First Des. Glory to Arimanes! on the earth
His power increaseth — both my sisters did
His bidding, nor did I neglect my duty!
Second Des. Glory to Arimanes! we who bow
The necks of men, bow down before his throne!
Third Des. Glory to Arimanes! we await
His nod!
Nem. Sovereign of Sovereigns! we are thine,
And all that liveth, more or less, is ours,
And most things wholly so; still to increase
Our power, increasing thine, demands our care
And we are vigilant — Thy late commands
Have been fulfill'd to the utmost.

Enter MANFRED.

A Spirit. What is here?
A mortal! — Thou most rash and fatal wretch,
Bow down and worship!

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Second Spirit. I do know the man —
A Magian of great power, and fearful skill!
Third Spirit. Bow down and worship, slave! — What
know'st thou not
Thine and our Sovereign? — Tremble, and obey! [clay,
All the Spirits. Prostrate thyself, and thy condemned
Child of the Earth! or dread the worst.
Man. I know it;
And yet ye see I kneel not.
Fourth Spirit. 'T will be taught thee.
Man. 'T is taught already; — many a night on the earth,
On the bare ground, have I bow'd down my face,
And strew'd my head with ashes; I have known
The fulness of humiliation, for
I sunk before my vain despair, and knelt
To my own desolation.
Fifth Spirit. Dost thou dare
Refuse to Arimanes on his throne
What the whole earth accords, beholding not
The terror of his Glory — Crouch! I say.
Man. Bid *him* bow down to that which is above him,
The overruling Infinite — the Maker
Who made him not for worship — let him kneel,
And we will kneel together.
The Spirits. Crush the worm!
Tear him in pieces! —
First Des. Hence! Avaunt! — he 's mine.
Prince of the Powers invisible! This man
Is of no common order, as his port
And presence here denote; his sufferings
Have been of an immortal nature, like
Our own; his knowledge, and his powers and will,
As far as is compatible with clay,
Which clogs the ethereal essence, have been such
As clay hath seldom borne; his aspirations
Have been beyond the dwellers of the earth,
And they have only taught him what we know —
That knowledge is not happiness, and science
But an exchange of ignorance for that
Which is another kind of ignorance.
This is not all — the passions, attributes
Of earth and heaven, from which no power, nor being,
Nor breath from the worm upwards is exempt,
Have pierced his heart; and in their consequence
Made him a thing, which I, who pity not,
Yet pardon those who pity. He is mine,

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And thine, it may be — be it so, or not,
No other Spirit in this region hath
A soul like his — or power upon his soul.
Nem. What doth he here then?
First Des. Let him answer that.
Man. Ye know what I have known; and without power
I could not be amongst ye: but there are
Powers deeper still beyond — I come in quest
Of such, to answer unto what I seek.
Nem. What would'st thou?
Man. Thou canst not reply to me.
Call up the dead — my question is for them.
Nem. Great Arimanes, doth thy will avouch
The wishes of this mortal?
Ari. Yea.
Nem. Whom would'st thou
Uncharnel?
Man. One without a tomb — call up
Astarte.

NEMESIS.

Shadow! or Spirit!
Whatever thou art,
Which still doth inherit
The whole or a part
Of the form of thy birth,
Of the mould of thy clay,
Which return'd to the earth,
Re-appear to the day!
Bear what thou borest,
The heart and the form,
And the aspect thou worest
Redeem from the worm.
Appear! — Appear! — Appear!
Who sent thee there requires thee here!

[*The Phantom of* ASTARTE *rises and stands in the midst.*

Man. Can this be death? there 's bloom upon her cheek;
But now I see it is no living hue,
But a strange hectic — like the unnatural red
Which Autumn plants upon the perish'd leaf.
It is the same! Oh, God! that I should dread
To look upon the same — Astarte! — No,
I cannot speak to her — but bid her speak —
Forgive me or condemn me.

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NEMESIS.

By the power which hath broken
The grave which enthrall'd thee,
Speak to him who hath spoken,
Or those who have call'd thee!

Man. She is silent,
And in that silence I am more than answer'd.
Nem. My power extends no further. Prince of air!
It rests with thee alone — command her voice.
Ari. Spirit — obey this sceptre!
Nem. Silent still!
She is not of our order, but belongs
To the other powers. Mortal! thy quest is vain,
And we are baffled also.
Man. Hear me, hear me —
Astarte! my beloved! speak to me:
I have so much endured — so much endure —
Look on me! the grave hath not changed thee more
Than I am changed for thee. Thou lovedst me
Too much, as I loved thee: we were not made
To torture thus each other, though it were
The deadliest sin to love as we have loved.
Say that thou loath'st me not — that I do bear
This punishment for both — that thou wilt be
One of the blessed — and that I shall die;
For hitherto all hateful things conspire
To bind me in existence — in a life
Which makes me shrink from immortality —
A future like the past. I cannot rest.
I know not what I ask, nor what I seek:
I feel but what thou art — and what I am;
And I would hear yet once before I perish
The voice which was my music — Speak to me!
For I have call'd on thee in the still night,
Startled the slumbering birds from the hush'd boughs,
And woke the mountain wolves, and made the caves
Acquainted with thy vainly echoed name,
Which answer'd me — many things answer'd me —
Spirits and men — but thou wert silent all.
Yet speak to me! I have outwatch'd the stars,
And gazed o'er heaven in vain in search of thee.
Speak to me! I have wander'd o'er the earth,
And never found my likeness — Speak to me!
Look on the fiends around — they feel for me:
I fear them not, and feel for thee alone —

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Speak to me! though it be in wrath; — but say —
I reck not what — but let me hear thee once —
This once — once more!
Phantom of Astarte. Manfred!
Man. Say on, say on —
I live but in the sound — it is thy voice!
Phan. Manfred! To-morrow ends thine earthly ills.
Farewell!
Man. Yet one word more — am I forgiven?
Phan. Farewell!
Man. Say, shall we meet again?
Phan. Farewell!
Man. One word for mercy! Say, thou lovest me.
Phan. Manfred!
[*The Spirit of* ASTARTE *disappears.*
Nem. She 's gone, and will not be recall'd;
Her words will be fulfill'd. Return to the earth.
A Spirit. He is convulsed — This is to be a mortal,
And seek the things beyond mortality. [makes
Another Spirit. Yet, see, he mastereth himself, and
His torture tributary to his will.
Had he been one of us, he would have made
An awful spirit.
Nem. Hast thou further question
Of our great sovereign, or his worshippers?
Man. None.
Nem. Then for a time farewell.
Man. We meet then! Where? On the earth? —
Even as thou wilt: and for the grace accorded
I now depart a debtor. Fare ye well! [*Exit* MANFRED.
(*Scene closes.*)

ACT III.

SCENE I.

A Hall in the Castle of Manfred.

MANFRED *and* HERMAN.

Man. What is the hour?
Her. It wants but one till sunset,
And promises a lovely twilight.
Man. Say,
Are all things so disposed of in the tower
As I directed?

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Her. All, my lord, are ready;
Here is the key and casket.
Man. It is well:
Thou may'st retire. [*Exit* HERMAN.
Man. (*alone.*) There is a calm upon me —
Inexplicable stillness! which till now
Did not belong to what I knew of life.
If that I did not know philosophy
To be of all our vanities the motliest,
The merest word that ever fool'd the ear
From out the schoolman's jargon, I should deem
The golden secret, the sought "Kalon," found,
And seated in my soul. It will not last,
But it is well to have known it, though but once:
It hath enlarged my thoughts with a new sense,
And I within my tablets would note down
That there is such a feeling. Who is there?

Re-enter HERMAN.

Her. My lord, the abbot of St. Maurice craves
To greet your presence.

Enter the ABBOT OF ST. MAURICE.

Abbot. Peace be with Count Manfred!
Man. Thanks, holy father! welcome to these walls;
Thy presence honours them, and blesseth those
Who dwell within them.
Abbot. Would it were so, Count! —
But I would fain confer with thee alone.
Man. Herman, retire. What would my reverend guest?
Abbot. Thus, without prelude: — Age and zeal, my office,
And good intent, must plead my privilege;
Our near, though not acquainted neighbourhood,
May also be my herald. Rumours strange,
And of unholy nature, are abroad,
And busy with thy name; a noble name
For centuries: may he who bears it now
Transmit it unimpair'd!
Man. Proceed, — I listen.
Abbot. 'T is said thou holdest converse with the things
Which are forbidden to the search of man;
That with the dwellers of the dark abodes,
The many evil and unheavenly spirits
Which walk the valley of the shade of death,

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Thou communest. I know that with mankind,
Thy fellows in creation, thou dost rarely
Exchange thy thoughts, and that thy solitude
Is as an anchorite's, were it but holy.
Man. And what are they who do avouch these things?
Abbot. My pious brethren — the scared peasantry —
Even thy own vassals — who do look on thee
With most unquiet eyes. Thy life 's in peril.
Man. Take it.
Abbot. I come to save, and not destroy —
I would not pry into thy secret soul;
But if these things be sooth, there still is time
For penitence and pity: reconcile thee
With the true church, and through the church to heaven.
Man. I hear thee. This is my reply; whate'er
I may have been, or am, doth rest between
Heaven and myself.—I shall not choose a mortal
To be my mediator. Have I sinn'd
Against your ordinances? prove and punish!
Abbot. My son! I did not speak of punishment,
But penitence and pardon; — with thyself,
The choice of such remains — and for the last,
Our institutions and our strong belief
Have given me power to smooth the path from sin
To higher hope and better thoughts; the first
I leave to heaven — "Vengeance is mine alone!"
So saith the Lord, and with all humbleness
His servant echoes back the awful word.
Man. Old man! there is no power in holy men,
Nor charm in prayer — nor purifying form
Of penitence — nor outward look — nor fast —
Nor agony — nor, greater than all these,
The innate tortures of that deep despair,
Which is remorse without the fear of hell,
But all in all sufficient to itself
Would make a hell of heaven — can exorcise
From out the unbounded spirit, the quick sense
Of its own sins, wrongs, sufferance, and revenge
Upon itself; there is no future pang
Can deal that justice on the self-condemn'd
He deals on his own soul.
Abbot. All this is well;
For this will pass away, and be succeeded
By an auspicious hope, which shall look up
With calm assurance to that blessed place,
Which all who seek may win, whatever be

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Their earthly errors, so they be atoned:
And the commencement of atonement is
The sense of its necessity.— Say on —
And all our church can teach thee shall be taught;
And all we can absolve thee shall be pardon'd.

Man. When Rome's sixth emperor was near his last,
The victim of a self-inflicted wound,
To shun the torments of a public death
From senates once his slaves, a certain soldier,
With show of loyal pity, would have stanch'd
The gushing throat with his officious robe;
The dying Roman thrust him back, and said —
Some empire still in his expiring glance,
"It is too late — is this fidelity?"

Abbot. And what of this?

Man. I answer with the Roman —
"It is too late!"

Abbot. It never can be so,
To reconcile thyself with thy own soul,
And thy own soul with heaven. Hast thou no hope?
'T is strange — even those who do despair above,
Yet shape themselves some fantasy on earth,
To which frail twig they cling like drowning men.

Man. Ay — father! I have had those earthly visions
And noble aspirations in my youth,
To make my own the mind of other men,
The enlightener of nations; and to rise
I knew not whither — it might be to fall;
But fall, even as the mountain-cataract,
Which having leapt from its more dazzling height,
Even in the foaming strength of its abyss,
(Which casts up misty columns that become
Clouds raining from the re-ascended skies,)
Lies low but mighty still. But this is past,
My thoughts mistook themselves.

Abbot. And wherefore so?

Man. I could not tame my nature down; for he
Must serve who fain would sway — and soothe — and sue —
And watch all time — and pry into all place —
And be a living lie — who would become
A mighty thing among the mean, and such
The mass are; I disdain'd to mingle with
A herd, though to be leader — and of wolves.
The lion is alone, and so am I.

Abbot. And why not live and act with other men?

Man. Because my nature was averse from life;

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And yet not cruel; for I would not make,
But find a desolation: — like the wind,
The red-hot breath of the most lone Simoom,
Which dwells but in the desert, and sweeps o'er
The barren sands which bear no shrubs to blast,
And revels o'er their wild and arid waves,
And seeketh not, so that it is not sought,
But being met is deadly; such hath been
The course of my existence; but there came
Things in my path which are no more.

Abbot. Alas!
I 'gin to fear that thou art past all aid
From me and from my calling; yet so young,
I still would ——

Man. Look on me! there is an order
Of mortals on the earth, who do become
Old in their youth, and die ere middle age,
Without the violence of warlike death;
Some perishing of pleasure — some of study —
Some worn with toil — some of mere weariness —
Some of disease — and some insanity —
And some of wither'd, or of broken hearts;
For this last is a malady which slays
More than are number'd in the lists of Fate,
Taking all shapes, and bearing many names.
Look upon me! for even of all these things
Have I partaken; and of all these things,
One were enough: then wonder not that I
Am what I am, but that I ever was,
Or having been, that I am still on earth.

Abbot. Yet, hear me still ——

Man. Old man! I do respect
Thine order, and revere thine years; I deem
Thy purpose pious, but it is in vain:
Think me not churlish; I would spare thyself,
Far more than me, in shunning at this time
All further colloquy — and so — farewell.

[*Exit* MANFRED.

Abbot. This should have been a noble creature: he
Hath all the energy which would have made
A goodly frame of glorious elements,
Had they been wisely mingled; as it is,
It is an awful chaos — light and darkness —
And mind and dust — and passions and pure thoughts
Mix'd, and contending without end or order,
All dormant or destructive: he will perish,

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And yet he must not; I will try once more,
For such are worth redemption; and my duty
Is to dare all things for a righteous end.
I 'll follow him — but cautiously, though surely.

[*Exit* ABBOT.

SCENE II.

Another Chamber.

MANFRED *and* HERMAN.

Her. My lord, you bade me wait on you at sunset:
He sinks behind the mountain.

Man. Doth he so?
I will look on him.

[MANFRED *advances to the Window of the Hall.*

Glorious Orb! the idol
Of early nature, and the vigorous race
Of undiseased mankind, the giant sons (1)
Of the embrace of angels, with a sex
More beautiful than they, which did draw down
The erring spirits who can ne'er return.—
Most glorious orb! that wert a worship, ere
The mystery of thy making was reveal'd!
Thou earliest minister of the Almighty,
Which gladden'd, on their mountain tops, the hearts
Of the Chaldean shepherds, till they pour'd
Themselves in orisons! Thou material God!
And representative of the Unknown —
Who chose thee for his shadow! Thou chief star!
Centre of many stars! which mak'st our earth
Endurable, and temperest the hues
And hearts of all who walk within thy rays!
Sire of the seasons! Monarch of the climes,
And those who dwell in them! for near or far,
Our inborn spirits have a tint of thee
Even as our outward aspects; — thou dost rise,
And shine, and set in glory. Fare thee well!
I ne'er shall see thee more. As my first glance
Of love and wonder was for thee, then take

(1) "That the *Sons of God* saw the daughters of men, that they were fair," &c. "There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the *Sons of God* came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown."
Genesis, ch. vi. versos 2 and 4.

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My latest look: thou wilt not beam on one
To whom the gifts of life and warmth have been
Of a more fatal nature. He is gone:
I follow. [*Exit* MANFRED.

SCENE III.

The Mountains — The Castle of Manfred at some distance — A Terrace before a Tower.— Time, Twilight.

HERMAN, MANUEL, *and other Dependants of* MANFRED.

Her. 'T is strange enough; night after night, for years,
He hath pursued long vigils in this tower,
Without a witness. I have been within it, —
So have we all been oft-times; but from it,
Or its contents, it were impossible
To draw conclusions absolute, of aught
His studies tend to. To be sure, there is
One chamber where none enter: I would give
The fee of what I have to come these three years,
To pore upon its mysteries.
Manuel. 'T were dangerous;
Content thyself with what thou know'st already.
Her. Ah! Manuel! thou art elderly and wise,
And couldst say much; thou hast dwelt within the castle —
How many years is 't?
Manuel. Ere Count Manfred's birth,
I served his father, whom he nought resembles.
Her. There be more sons in like predicament.
But wherein do they differ?
Manuel. I speak not
Of features or of form, but mind and habits;
Count Sigismund was proud, — but gay and free, —
A warrior and a reveller; he dwelt not
With books and solitude, nor made the night
A gloomy vigil, but a festal time,
Merrier than day; he did not walk the rocks
And forests like a wolf, nor turn aside
From men and their delights.
Her. Beshrew the hour,
But those were jocund times! I would that such
Would visit the old walls again; they look
As if they had forgotten them.
Manuel. These walls
Must change their chieftain first. Oh! I have seen
Some strange things in them, Herman.

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Her. Come, be friendly;
Relate me some to while away our watch:
I've heard thee darkly speak of an event
Which happen'd hereabouts, by this same tower.
Manuel. That was a night indeed! I do remember
'T was twilight, as it may be now, and such
Another evening; — yon red cloud, which rests
On Eigher's pinnacle, so rested then, —
So like that it might be the same; the wind
Was faint and gusty, and the mountain snows
Began to glitter with the climbing moon;
Count Manfred was, as now, within his tower, —
How occupied, we knew not, but with him
The sole companion of his wanderings
And watchings — her, whom of all earthly things
That lived, the only thing he seem'd to love, —
As he, indeed, by blood, was bound to do,
The lady Astarte, his ——
Hush! who comes here?

Enter the ABBOT.

Abbot. Where is your master?
Her. Yonder in the tower.
Abbot. I must speak with him.
Manuel. 'T is impossible;
He is most private, and must not be thus
Intruded on.
Abbot. Upon myself I take
The forfeit of my fault, if fault there be —
But I must see him.
Her. Thou hast seen him once
This eve already.
Abbot. Herman! I command thee,
Knock, and apprize the Count of my approach.
Her. We dare not.
Abbot. Then it seems I must be herald
Of my own purpose.
Manuel. Reverend father, stop —
I pray you pause.
Abbot. Why so?
Manuel. But step this way,
And I will tell you further. [*Exeunt.*

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SCENE IV.

Interior of the Tower.

MANFRED *alone.*

Man. The stars are forth, the moon above the tops
Of the snow-shining mountain.—Beautiful!
I linger yet with Nature, for the night
Hath been to me a more familiar face
Than that of man; and in her starry shade
Of dim and solitary loveliness,
I learn'd the language of another world.
I do remember me, that in my youth,
When I was wandering, — upon such a night
I stood within the Coliseum's wall,
Midst the chief relics of almighty Rome;
The trees which grew along the broken arches
Waved dark in the blue midnight, and the stars
Shone through the rents of ruin; from afar
The watchdog bay'd beyond the Tiber; and
More near from out the Cæsars' palace came
The owl's long cry, and, interruptedly,
Of distant sentinels the fitful song
Begun and died upon the gentle wind.
Some cypresses beyond the time-worn breach
Appear'd to skirt the horizon, yet they stood
Within a bowshot — Where the Cæsars dwelt,
And dwell the tuneless birds of night, amidst
A grove which springs through levell'd battlements,
And twines its roots with the imperial hearths,
Ivy usurps the laurel's place of growth; —
But the gladiators' bloody Circus stands,
A noble wreck in ruinous perfection!
While Cæsar's chambers and the Augustan halls,
Grovel on earth in indistinct decay.—
And thou didst shine, thou rolling moon, upon
All this, and cast a wide and tender light,
Which soften'd down the hoar austerity
Of rugged desolation, and fill'd up,
As 't were anew, the gaps of centuries;
Leaving that beautiful which still was so,
And making that which was not, till the place
Became religion, and the heart ran o'er

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With silent worship of the great of old! —
The dead, but sceptred sovereigns, who still rule
Our spirits from their urns. —
'T was such a night!
'T is strange that I recall it at this time;
But I have found our thoughts take wildest flight
Even at the moment when they should array
Themselves in pensive order.

Enter the ABBOT.

Abbot. My good lord!
I crave a second grace for this approach;
But yet let not my humble zeal offend
By its abruptness — all it hath of ill
Recoils on me; its good in the effect
May light upon your head — could I say *heart* —
Could I touch *that*, with words or prayers, I should
Recall a noble spirit which hath wander'd;
But is not yet all lost.
Man. Thou know'st me not;
My days are number'd, and my deeds recorded:
Retire, or 't will be dangerous — Away!
Abbot. Thou dost not mean to menace me?
Man. Not I;
I simply tell thee peril is at hand,
And would preserve thee.
Abbot. What dost thou mean?
Man. Look there!
What dost thou see?
Abbot. Nothing.
Man. Look there, I say,
And steadfastly; — now tell me what thou seest?
Abbot. That which should shake me, — but I fear it not —
I see a dusk and awful figure rise,
Like an infernal god, from out the earth;
His face wrapt in a mantle, and his form
Robed as with angry clouds; he stands between
Thyself and me — but I do fear him not. [but
Man. Thou hast no cause — he shall not harm thee —
His sight may shock thine old limbs into palsy.
I say to thee — Retire!
Abbot. And I reply —
Never — till I have battled with this fiend: —
What doth he here?

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Man. Why — ay — what doth he here? —
I did not send for him, — he is unbidden.
Abbot. Alas! lost mortal! what with guests like these
Hast thou to do? I tremble for thy sake:
Why doth he gaze on thee, and thou on him?
Ah! he unveils his aspect: on his brow
The thunder-scars are graven; from his eye
Glares forth the immortality of hell —
Avaunt! ——
Man. Pronounce — what is thy mission?
Spirit. Come!
Abbot. What art thou, unknown being? answer! — speak!
Spirit. The genius of this mortal. — Come! 't is time.
Man. I am prepared for all things, but deny
The power which summons me. Who sent thee here?
Spirit. Thou 'lt know anon — Come! come!
Man. I have commanded
Things of an essence greater far than thine,
And striven with thy masters. Get thee hence!
Spirit. Mortal! thine hour is come — Away! I say.
Man. I knew, and know my hour is come, but not
To render up my soul to such as thee:
Away! I 'll die as I have lived — alone.
Spirit. Then I must summon up my brethren. — Rise!
[*Other Spirits rise up.*
Abbot. Avaunt! ye evil ones! — Avaunt! — I say, —
Ye have no power where piety hath power,
And I do charge ye in the name ——
Spirit. Old man!
We know ourselves, our mission, and thine order;
Waste not thy holy words on idle uses,
It were in vain: this man is forfeited.
Once more I summon him — Away! away!
Man. I do defy ye, — though I feel my soul
Is ebbing from me, yet I do defy ye;
Nor will I hence, while I have earthly breath
To breathe my scorn upon ye — earthly strength
To wrestle, though with spirits; what ye take
Shall be ta'en limb by limb.
Spirit. Reluctant mortal!
Is this the Magian who would so pervade
The world invisible, and make himself
Almost our equal? — Can it be that thou
Art thus in love with life? the very life
Which made thee wretched!

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Man. Thou false fiend, thou liest!
My life is in its last hour, — *that* I know,
Nor would redeem a moment of that hour;
I do not combat against death, but thee
And thy surrounding angels; my past power
Was purchased by no compact with thy crew,
But by superior science — penance — daring —
And length of watching — strength of mind — and skill
In knowledge of our fathers — when the earth
Saw men and spirits walking side by side,
And gave ye no supremacy: I stand
Upon my strength — I do defy — deny —
Spurn back, and scorn ye! —
Spirit. But thy many crimes
Have made thee ——
Man. What are they to such as thee?
Must crimes be punish'd but by other crimes,
And greater criminals? — Back to thy hell!
Thou hast no power upon me, *that* I feel;
Thou never shalt possess me, *that* I know:
What I have done is done; I bear within
A torture which could nothing gain from thine:
The mind which is immortal makes itself
Requital for its good or evil thoughts —
Is its own origin of ill and end —
And its own place and time — its innate sense,
When stripp'd of this mortality, derives
No colour from the fleeting things without;
But is absorb'd in sufferance or in joy,
Born from the knowledge of its own desert.
Thou didst not tempt me, and thou couldst not tempt me;
I have not been thy dupe, nor am thy prey —
But was my own destroyer, and will be
My own hereafter. — Back, ye baffled fiends!
The hand of death is on me — but not yours!

[*The Demons disappear.*

Abbot. Alas! how pale thou art — thy lips are white —
And thy breast heaves — and in thy gasping throat
The accents rattle — Give thy prayers to Heaven —
Pray — albeit but in thought, — but die not thus.
Man. 'T is over — my dull eyes can fix thee not;
But all things swim around me, and the earth
Heaves as it were beneath me. Fare thee well —
Give me thy hand.
Abbot. Cold — cold — even to the heart —
But yet one prayer — Alas! how fares it with thee? —

Man. Old man! 't is not so difficult to die.

[MANFRED *expires.*

Abbot. He 's gone — his soul hath ta'en its earthless flight —
Whither? I dread to think — but he is gone.

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HEBREW MELODIES.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE subsequent poems were written at the request of my friend, the Hon. D. Kinnaird, for a Selection of Hebrew Melodies, and have been published, with the music, arranged by Mr. BRAHAM and Mr. NATHAN.

January, 1815.

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HEBREW MELODIES.

SHE WALKS IN BEAUTY.

I.

She walks in beauty, like the night
Of cloudless climes and starry skies;
And all that's best of dark and bright
Meet in her aspect and her eyes:
Thus mellow'd to that tender light
Which heaven to gaudy day denies.

II.

One shade the more, one ray the less,
Had half impair'd the nameless grace
Which waves in every raven tress,
Or softly lightens o'er her face;
Where thoughts serenely sweet express
How pure, how dear their dwelling-place.

III.

And on that cheek, and o'er that brow,
So soft, so calm, yet eloquent,
The smiles that win, the tints that glow,
But tell of days in goodness spent,
A mind at peace with all below,
A heart whose love is innocent!

THE HARP THE MONARCH MINSTREL SWEPT.

I.

The harp the monarch minstrel swept,
The King of men, the loved of Heaven,
Which Music hallow'd while she wept
O'er tones her heart of hearts had given,
Redoubled be her tears, its chords are riven!

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It soften'd men of iron mould,
  It gave them virtues not their own;
No ear so dull, no soul so cold,
  That felt not, fired not to the tone,
  Till David's lyre grew mightier than his throne!

II.

It told the triumphs of our King,
  It wafted glory to our God;
It made our gladden'd valleys ring,
  The cedars bow, the mountains nod;
  Its sound aspired to Heaven and there abode!
Since then, though heard on earth no more,
  Devotion and her daughter Love
Still bid the bursting spirit soar
  To sounds that seem as from above,
  In dreams that day's broad light can not remove.

IF THAT HIGH WORLD.

I.

If that high world, which lies beyond
  Our own, surviving Love endears;
If there the cherish'd heart be fond,
  The eye the same, except in tears —
How welcome those untrodden spheres!
  How sweet this very hour to die!
To soar from earth and find all fears
  Lost in thy light — Eternity!

II.

It must be so: 't is not for self
  That we so tremble on the brink;
And striving to o'erleap the gulf,
  Yet cling to Being's severing link.
Oh! in that future let us think
  To hold each heart the heart that shares,
With them the immortal waters drink,
  And soul in soul grow deathless theirs!

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THE WILD GAZELLE.

I.

THE wild gazelle on Judah's hills
Exulting yet may bound,
And drink from all the living rills
That gush on holy ground;
Its airy step and glorious eye
May glance in tameless transport by: —

II.

A step as fleet, an eye more bright
Hath Judah witness'd there;
And o'er her scenes of lost delight
Inhabitants more fair.
The cedars wave on Lebanon,
But Judah's statelier maids are gone!

III.

More blest each palm that shades those plains
Than Israel's scatter'd race;
For, taking root, it there remains
In solitary grace:
It cannot quit its place of birth,
It will not live in other earth.

IV.

But we must wander witheringly,
In other lands to die;
And where our fathers' ashes be,
Our own may never lie:
Our temple hath not left a stone,
And Mockery sits on Salem's throne.

OH! WEEP FOR THOSE.

I.

OH! weep for those that wept by Babel's stream,
Whose shrines are desolate, whose land a dream;
Weep for the harp of Judah's broken shell;
Mourn — where their God hath dwelt the Godless dwell!

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II.

And where shall Israel lave her bleeding feet?
And when shall Zion's songs again seem sweet?
And Judah's melody once more rejoice
The hearts that leap'd before its heavenly voice?

III.

Tribes of the wandering foot and weary breast,
How shall ye flee away and be at rest!
The wild-dove hath her nest, the fox his cave,
Mankind their country — Israel but the grave!

ON JORDAN'S BANKS.

I.

On Jordan's banks the Arab's camels stray,
On Sion's hill the False One's votaries pray,
The Baal-adorer bows on Sinai's steep —
Yet there — even there — Oh God! thy thunders sleep:

II.

There — where thy finger scorch'd the tablet stone!
There — where thy shadow to thy people shone!
Thy glory shrouded in its garb of fire:
Thyself — none living see and not expire!

III.

Oh! in the lightning let thy glance appear;
Sweep from his shiver'd hand the oppressor's spear:
How long by tyrants shall thy land be trod!
How long thy temple worshipless, Oh God!

JEPHTHA'S DAUGHTER.

I.

Since our Country, our God — Oh, my Sire!
Demand that thy Daughter expire;
Since thy triumph was bought by thy vow —
Strike the bosom that's bared for thee now!

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II.

And the voice of my mourning is o'er,
And the mountains behold me no more:
If the hand that I love lay me low,
There cannot be pain in the blow!

III.

And of this, oh, my Father! be sure —
That the blood of thy child is as pure
As the blessing I beg ere it flow,
And the last thought that soothes me below.

IV.

Though the virgins of Salem lament,
Be the judge and the hero unbent!
I have won the great battle for thee,
And my Father and Country are free!

V.

When this blood of thy giving hath gush'd,
When the voice that thou lovest is hush'd,
Let my memory still be thy pride,
And forget not I smiled as I died!

OH! SNATCH'D AWAY IN BEAUTY'S BLOOM.

I.

Oh! snatch'd away in beauty's bloom,
On thee shall press no ponderous tomb;
But on thy turf shall roses rear
Their leaves, the earliest of the year;
And the wild cypress wave in tender gloom:

II.

And oft by yon blue gushing stream
Shall Sorrow lean her drooping head,
And feed deep thought with many a dream,
And lingering pause and lightly tread;
Fond wretch! as if her step disturb'd the dead.

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III.

Away! we know that tears are vain,
That death nor heeds nor hears distress:
Will this unteach us to complain?
Or make one mourner weep the less?
And thou — who tell'st me to forget,
Thy looks are wan, thine eyes are wet.

MY SOUL IS DARK.

I.

My soul is dark — Oh! quickly string
The harp I yet can brook to hear;
And let thy gentle fingers fling
Its melting murmurs o'er mine ear.
If in this heart a hope be dear,
That sound shall charm it forth again:
If in these eyes there lurk a tear,
'T will flow, and cease to burn my brain.

II.

But bid the strain be wild and deep,
Nor let thy notes of joy be first:
I tell thee, minstrel, I must weep,
Or else this heavy heart will burst;
For it hath been by sorrow nursed,
And ached in sleepless silence long;
And now 't is doom'd to know the worst,
And break at once — or yield to song.

I SAW THEE WEEP.

I.

I saw thee weep — the big bright tear
Came o'er that eye of blue;
And then methought it did appear
A violet dropping dew:
I saw thee smile — the sapphire's blaze
Beside thee ceased to shine;
It could not match the living rays
That fill'd that glance of thine.

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II.

As clouds from yonder sun receive
A deep and mellow dye,
Which scarce the shade of coming eve
Can banish from the sky,
Those smiles unto the moodiest mind
Their own pure joy impart;
Their sunshine leaves a glow behind
That lightens o'er the heart.

THY DAYS ARE DONE.

I.

Thy days are done, thy fame begun;
Thy country's strains record
The triumphs of her chosen Son,
The slaughters of his sword!
The deeds he did, the fields he won,
The freedom he restored!

II.

Though thou art fall'n, while we are free
Thou shalt not taste of death!
The generous blood that flow'd from thee
Disdain'd to sink beneath:
Within our veins its currents be,
Thy spirit on our breath!

III.

Thy name, our charging hosts along,
Shall be the battle-word!
Thy fall, the theme of choral song
From virgin voices pour'd!
To weep would do thy glory wrong;
Thou shalt not be deplored.

SONG OF SAUL BEFORE HIS LAST BATTLE.

I.

Warriors and chiefs! should the shaft or the sword
Pierce me in leading the host of the Lord,
Heed not the course, though a king's, in your path:
Bury your steel in the bosoms of Gath!

Google

II.

Thou who art bearing my buckler and bow,
Should the soldiers of Saul look away from the foe,
Stretch me that moment in blood at thy feet!
Mine be the doom which they dared not to meet.

III.

Farewell to others, but never we part,
Heir to my royalty, son of my heart!
Bright is the diadem, boundless the sway,
Or kingly the death, which awaits us to-day!

SAUL.

I.

Thou whose spell can raise the dead,
Bid the prophet's form appear.
"Samuel, raise thy buried head!
King, behold the phantom seer!"
Earth yawn'd; he stood the centre of a cloud:
Light changed its hue, retiring from his shroud.
Death stood all glassy in his fixed eye;
His hand was wither'd, and his veins were dry;
His foot, in bony whiteness, glitter'd there,
Shrunken and sinewless, and ghastly bare;
From lips that moved not and unbreathing frame,
Like cavern'd winds, the hollow accents came.
Saul saw, and fell to earth, as falls the oak,
At once, and blasted by the thunder-stroke.

II.

"Why is my sleep disquieted?
Who is he that calls the dead?
Is it thou, O king? Behold,
Bloodless are these limbs, and cold:
Such are mine; and such shall be
Thine to-morrow, when with me:
Ere the coming day is done,
Such shalt thou be, such thy son.
Fare thee well, but for a day,
Then we mix our mouldering clay.

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Thou, thy race, lie pale and low,
Pierced by shafts of many a bow;
And the falchion by thy side
To thy heart thy hand shall guide:
Crownless, breathless, headless fall,
Son and sire, the house of Saul!"

"ALL IS VANITY, SAITH THE PREACHER."

I.

Fame, wisdom, love, and power were mine,
And health and youth possess'd me;
My goblets blush'd from every vine,
And lovely forms caress'd me;
I sunn'd my heart in beauty's eyes,
And felt my soul grow tender;
All earth can give, or mortal prize,
Was mine of regal splendour.

II.

I strive to number o'er what days
Remembrance can discover,
Which all that life or earth displays
Would lure me to live over.
There rose no day, there roll'd no hour
Of pleasure unembitter'd;
And not a trapping deck'd my power
That gall'd not while it glitter'd.

III.

The serpent of the field, by art
And spells, is won from harming;
But that which coils around the heart,
Oh! who hath power of charming?
It will not list to wisdom's lore,
Nor music's voice can lure it;
But there it stings for evermore
The soul that must endure it.

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WHEN COLDNESS WRAPS THIS SUFFERING CLAY.

I.

When coldness wraps this suffering clay,
Ah! whither strays the immortal mind?
It cannot die, it cannot stay,
But leaves its darken'd dust behind.
Then, unembodied, doth it trace
By steps each planet's heavenly way?
Or fill at once the realms of space,
A thing of eyes, that all survey?

II.

Eternal, boundless, undecay'd,
A thought unseen, but seeing all,
All, all in earth, or skies display'd,
Shall it survey, shall it recall:
Each fainter trace that memory holds
So darkly of departed years,
In one broad glance the soul beholds,
And all, that was, at once appears.

III.

Before Creation peopled earth,
Its eye shall roll through chaos back;
And where the furthest heaven had birth,
The spirit trace its rising track.
And where the future mars or makes,
Its glance dilate o'er all to be,
While sun is quench'd or system breaks,
Fix'd in its own eternity.

IV.

Above or Love, Hope, Hate, or Fear,
It lives all passionless and pure:
An age shall fleet like earthly year;
Its years as moments shall endure.
Away, away, without a wing,
O'er all, through all, its thought shall fly;
A nameless and eternal thing,
Forgetting what it was to die.

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VISION OF BELSHAZZAR.

I.

THE King was on his throne,
The Satraps throng'd the hall;
A thousand bright lamps shone
O'er that high festival.
A thousand cups of gold,
In Judah deem'd divine —
Jehovah's vessels hold
The godless Heathen's wine!

II.

In that same hour and hall,
The fingers of a hand
Came forth against the wall,
And wrote as if on sand:
The fingers of a man; —
A solitary hand
Along the letters ran,
And traced them like a wand.

III.

The monarch saw, and shook,
And bade no more rejoice;
All bloodless wax'd his look,
And tremulous his voice.
"Let the men of lore appear,
The wisest of the earth,
And expound the words of fear,
Which mar our royal mirth."

IV.

Chaldea's seers are good,
But here they have no skill;
And the unknown letters stood
Untold and awful still.
And Babel's men of age
Are wise and deep in lore;
But now they were not sage,
They saw — but knew no more.

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v.

A captive in the land,
A stranger and a youth,
He heard the king's command,
He saw that writing's truth.
The lamps around were bright,
The prophecy in view;
He read it on that night, —
The morrow proved it true.

VI.

"Belshazzar's grave is made,
His kingdom pass'd away,
He, in the balance weigh'd,
Is light and worthless clay.
The shroud, his robe of state,
His canopy the stone;
The Mede is at his gate!
The Persian on his throne!"

SUN OF THE SLEEPLESS.

Sun of the sleepless! melancholy star!
Whose tearful beam glows tremulously far,
That show'st the darkness thou canst not dispel,
How like art thou to joy remember'd well!
So gleams the past, the light of other days,
Which shines, but warms not with its powerless rays;
A night-beam Sorrow watcheth to behold,
Distinct, but distant — clear — but, oh how cold!

WERE MY BOSOM AS FALSE AS THOU DEEM'ST IT TO BE.

I.

Were my bosom as false as thou deem'st it to be,
I need not have wander'd from far Galilee;
It was but abjuring my creed to efface
The curse which, thou say'st, is the crime of my race.

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II.

If the bad never triumph, then God is with thee!
If the slave only sin, thou art spotless and free!
If the Exile on earth is an Outcast on high,
Live on in thy faith, but in mine I will die.

III.

have lost for that faith more than thou canst bestow
As the God who permits thee to prosper doth know;
In his hand is my heart and my hope — and in thine
The land and the life which for him I resign.

HEROD'S LAMENT FOR MARIAMNE.

I.

Oh, Mariamne! now for thee
The heart for which thou bled'st is bleeding;
Revenge is lost in agony,
And wild remorse to rage succeeding.
Oh, Mariamne! where art thou?
Thou canst not hear my bitter pleading:
Ah, couldst thou — thou wouldst pardon now,
Though Heaven were to my prayer unheeding.

II.

And is she dead? — and did they dare
Obey my frenzy's jealous raving?
My wrath but doom'd my own despair:
The sword that smote her 's o'er me waving. —
But thou art cold, my murder'd love!
And this dark heart is vainly craving
For her who soars alone above,
And leaves my soul unworthy saving.

III.

She 's gone, who shared my diadem;
She sunk, with her my joys entombing;
I swept that flower from Judah's stem
Whose leaves for me alone were blooming;
And mine 's the guilt and mine the hell,
This bosom's desolation dooming;
And I have earn'd those tortures well,
Which unconsumed are still consuming!

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ON THE DAY OF THE DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM BY TITUS.

I.

From the last hill that looks on thy once holy dome
I beheld thee, oh Sion! when render'd to Rome:
'T was the last sun went down, and the flames of thy fall
Flash'd back on the last glance I gave to thy wall.

II.

I look'd for thy temple, I look'd for my home,
And forgot for a moment my bondage to come;
I beheld but the death-fire that fed on thy fane,
And the fast-fetter'd hands that made vengeance in vain.

III.

On many an eve, the high spot whence I gazed
Had reflected the last beam of day as it blazed;
While I stood on the height, and beheld the decline
Of the rays from the mountain that shone on thy shrine.

IV.

And now on that mountain I stood on that day,
But I mark'd not the twilight beam melting away;
Oh! would that the lightning had glared in its stead,
And the thunderbolt burst on the conqueror's head!

V.

But the Gods of the Pagan shall never profane
The shrine where Jehovah disdain'd not to reign;
And scatter'd and scorn'd as thy people may be,
Our worship, oh Father! is only for thee.

BY THE RIVERS OF BABYLON WE SAT DOWN AND WEPT.

I.

We sate down and wept by the waters
Of Babel, and thought of the day
When our foe, in the hue of his slaughters,
Made Salem's high places his prey;

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And ye, oh her desolate daughters!
Were scatter'd all weeping away.

II.

While sadly we gazed on the river
Which roll'd on in freedom below,
They demanded the song; but, oh never
That triumph the stranger shall know!
May this right hand be wither'd for ever,
Ere it string our high harp for the foe!

III.

On the willow that harp is suspended,
Oh Salem! its sound should be free;
And the hour when thy glories were ended
But left me that token of thee:
And ne'er shall its soft tones be blended
With the voice of the spoiler by me!

THE DESTRUCTION OF SENNACHERIB.

I.

The Assyrian came down like the wolf on the fold,
And his cohorts were gleaming in purple and gold;
And the sheen of their spears was like stars on the sea,
When the blue wave rolls nightly on deep Galilee.

II.

Like the leaves of the forest when Summer is green,
That host with their banners at sunset were seen:
Like the leaves of the forest when Autumn hath blown,
That host on the morrow lay wither'd and strown.

III.

For the Angel of Death spread his wings on the blast,
And breathed in the face of the foe as he pass'd;
And the eyes of the sleepers wax'd deadly and chill,
And their hearts but once heaved, and for ever grew still!

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IV.

And there lay the steed with his nostril all wide,
But through it there roll'd not the breath of his pride:
And the foam of his gasping lay white on the turf,
And cold as the spray of the rock-beating surf.

V.

And there lay the rider distorted and pale,
With the dew on his brow, and the rust on his mail;
And the tents were all silent, the banners alone,
The lances unlifted, the trumpet unblown.

VI.

And the widows of Ashur are loud in their wail,
And the idols are broke in the temple of Baal;
And the might of the Gentile, unsmote by the sword,
Hath melted like snow in the glance of the Lord!

FROM JOB.

I.

A SPIRIT pass'd before me: I beheld
The face of immortality unveil'd —
Deep sleep came down on every eye save mine —
And there it stood, — all formless — but divine:
Along my bones the creeping flesh did quake;
And as my damp hair stiffen'd, thus it spake:

II.

"Is man more just than God? Is man more pure
Than he who deems even Seraphs insecure?
Creatures of clay — vain dwellers in the dust!
The moth survives you, and are ye more just?
Things of a day! you wither ere the night,
Heedless and blind to Wisdom's wasted light!"

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ODE

TO

NAPOLEON BUONAPARTE.

" Expende Annibalem: — quot libras in duce summo
Invenies ? "

JUVENAL *Sat.* X.

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"THE Emperor Nepos was acknowledged by the *Senate*, by the *Italians*, and by the Provincials of *Gaul*; his moral virtues, and military talents, were loudly celebrated; and those who derived any private benefit from his government announced in prophetic strains the restoration of public felicity.

* * * * * * * * *

* * * * * * * * *

By this shameful abdication he protracted his life a few years, in a very ambiguous state, between an Emperor and an Exile, till ———"

GIBBON's *Decline and Fall*, vol. vi. p. 220.

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ODE

TO

NAPOLEON BUONAPARTE.

I.

'T is done — but yesterday a King!
And arm'd with Kings to strive —
And now thou art a nameless thing:
So abject — yet alive!
Is this the man of thousand thrones,
Who strew'd our earth with hostile bones
And can he thus survive?
Since he, miscall'd the Morning Star,
Nor man nor fiend hath fallen so far.

II.

Ill-minded man! why scourge thy kind
Who bow'd so low the knee?
By gazing on thyself grown blind,
Thou taught'st the rest to see.
With might unquestion'd, — power to save, —
Thine only gift hath been the grave
To those that worshipp'd thee;
Nor till thy fall could mortals guess
Ambition's less than littleness!

III.

Thanks for that lesson — it will teach
To after-warriors more
Than high Philosophy can preach,
And vainly preach'd before.
That spell upon the minds of men
Breaks never to unite again,
That led them to adore
Those Pagod things of sabre sway,
With fronts of brass, and feet of clay.

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IV.

The triumph, and the vanity,
The rapture of the strife — (1)
The earthquake voice of Victory,
To thee the breath of life;
The sword, the sceptre, and that sway
Which man seem'd made but to obey,
Wherewith renown was rife —
All quell'd! — Dark Spirit! what must be
The madness of thy memory!

V.

The Desolator desolate!
The Victor overthrown!
The Arbiter of others' fate
A Suppliant for his own!
Is it some yet imperial hope
That with such change can calmly cope?
Or dread of death alone?
To die a prince — or live a slave —
Thy choice is most ignobly brave!

VI.

He (2) who of old would rend the oak,
Dream'd not of the rebound;
Chain'd by the trunk he vainly broke —
Alone — how look'd he round?
Thou in the sternness of thy strength
An equal deed hast done at length,
And darker fate hast found:
He fell, the forest-prowlers' prey;
But thou must eat thy heart away!

VII.

The Roman, (3) when his burning heart
Was slaked with blood of Rome,
Threw down the dagger — dared depart,
In savage grandeur, home.—
He dared depart in utter scorn
Of men that such a yoke had borne,
Yet left him such a doom!
His only glory was that hour
Of self-upheld abandon'd power.

(1) "Certaminis *gaudia*," the expression of Attila in his harangue to his army, previous to the battle of Chalons, given in Cassiodorus.
(2) Milo.
(3) Sylla.

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VIII.

The Spaniard, (1) when the lust of sway
Had lost its quickening spell,
Cast crowns for rosaries away,
An empire for a cell;
A strict accountant of his beads,
A subtle disputant on creeds,
His dotage trifled well:
Yet better had he neither known
A bigot's shrine, nor despot's throne.

IX.

But thou — from thy reluctant hand
The thunderbolt is wrung —
Too late thou leav'st the high command
To which thy weakness clung;
All Evil Spirit as thou art,
It is enough to grieve the heart
To see thine own unstrung;
To think that God's fair world hath been
The footstool of a thing so mean;

X.

And Earth hath spilt her blood for him,
Who thus can hoard his own!
And Monarchs bow'd the trembling limb,
And thank'd him for a throne!
Fair Freedom! we may hold thee dear,
When thus thy mightiest foes their fear
In humblest guise have shown.
Oh! ne'er may tyrant leave behind
A brighter name to lure mankind!

XI.

Thine evil deeds are writ in gore,
Nor written thus in vain —
Thy triumphs tell of fame no more,
Or deepen every stain:
If thou hadst died as honour dies,
Some new Napoleon might arise,
To shame the world again —
But who would soar the solar height,
To set in such a starless night?

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(1) Charles V.

XII.

Weigh'd in the balance, hero dust
Is vile as vulgar clay;
Thy scales, Mortality! are just
To all that pass away:
But yet methought the living great
Some higher sparks should animate,
To dazzle and dismay:
Nor deem'd Contempt could thus make mirth
Of these, the Conquerors of the earth.

XIII.

And she, proud Austria's mournful flower,
Thy still imperial bride;
How bears her breast the torturing hour?
Still clings she to thy side?
Must she too bend, must she too share
Thy late repentance, long despair,
Thou throneless Homicide?
If still she loves thee, hoard that gem,
'T is worth thy vanish'd diadem!

XIV.

Then haste thee to thy sullen Isle,
And gaze upon the sea;
That element may meet thy smile,
It ne'er was ruled by thee!
Or trace with thine all idle hand
In loitering mood upon the sand
That Earth is now as free!
That Corinth's pedagogue hath now
Transferr'd his by-word to thy brow

XV.

Thou Timour! in his captive's cage (1)
What thought will there be thine,
While brooding in thy prison'd rage?
But one — "The world *was* mine!"
Unless, like he of Babylon,
All sense is with thy sceptre gone,
Life will not long confine
That spirit pour'd so widely forth —
So long obey'd — so little worth!

(2) The cage of Bajazet, by order of Tamerlane.

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XVI.

Or, like the thief of fire from heaven, (1)
Wilt thou withstand the shock?
And share with him, the unforgiven,
His vulture and his rock!
Foredoom'd by God — by man accurst,
And that last act, though not thy worst,
The very Fiend's arch mock; (2)
He in his fall preserved his pride.
And, if a mortal, had as proudly died!

(1) Prometheus.
(2) "The very fiend's arch mock —
To lip a wanton and suppose her chaste." —
Shakespere.

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MONODY

ON THE

DEATH OF THE RIGHT HON. R. B. SHERIDAN.

SPOKEN AT DRURY-LANE THEATRE.

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MONODY

ON THE

DEATH OF THE RIGHT HON. R. B. SHERIDAN,

SPOKEN AT DRURY-LANE THEATRE.

When the last sunshine of expiring day
In summer's twilight weeps itself away,
Who hath not felt the softness of the hour
Sink on the heart, as dew along the flower?
With a pure feeling which absorbs and awes
While Nature makes that melancholy pause,
Her breathing moment on the bridge where Time
Of light and darkness forms an arch sublime,
Who hath not shared that calm so still and deep,
The voiceless thought which would not speak but weep,
A holy concord — and a bright regret,
A glorious sympathy with suns that set?
'T is not harsh sorrow — but a tenderer woe,
Nameless, but dear to gentle hearts below,
Felt without bitterness — but full and clear,
A sweet dejection — a transparent tear,
Unmix'd with worldly grief or selfish stain,
Shed without shame — and secret without pain.

Even as the tenderness that hour instils
When Summer's day declines along the hills,
So feels the fulness of our heart and eyes
When all of Genius which can perish dies.
A mighty Spirit is eclips'd — a Power
Hath pass'd from day to darkness — to whose hour
Of light no likeness is bequeath'd — no name,
Focus at once of all the rays of Fame!
The flash of Wit — the bright Intelligence,
The beam of Song — the blaze of Eloquence,
Set with their Sun — but still have left behind
The enduring produce of immortal Mind;

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Fruits of a genial morn, and glorious noon
A deathless part of him who died too soon.
But small that portion of the wondrous whole,
These sparkling segments of that circling soul,
Which all embraced — and lighten'd over all,
To cheer — to pierce — to please — or to appal.
From the charm'd council to the festive board,
Of human feelings the unbounded lord;
In whose acclaim the loftiest voices vied,
The praised — the proud — who made his praise their pride.
When the loud cry of trampled Hindostan*
Arose to Heaven in her appeal from man,
His was the thunder — his the avenging rod,
The wrath — the delegated voice of God!
Which shook the nations through his lips — and blazed
Till vanquish'd senates trembled as they praised.

And here, oh! here, where yet all young and warm
The gay creations of his spirit charm,
The matchless dialogue — the deathless wit,
Which knew not what it was to intermit;
The glowing portraits, fresh from life, that bring
Home to our hearts the truth from which they spring;
These wondrous beings of his Fancy, wrought
To fulness by the fiat of his thought,
Here in their first abode you still may meet,
Bright with the hues of his Promethean heat;
A halo of the light of other days,
Which still the splendour of its orb betrays.

But should there be to whom the fatal blight
Of failing Wisdom yields a base delight,
Men who exult when minds of heavenly tone
Jar in the music which was born their own,
Still let them pause — ah! little do they know
That what to them seem'd Vice might be but Woe.
Hard is his fate on whom the public gaze
Is fix'd for ever to detract or praise;
Repose denies her requiem to his name,
And Folly loves the martyrdom of Fame.
The secret enemy whose sleepless eye
Stands sentinel — accuser — judge — and spy,

* See Fox, Burke, and Pitt's eulogy on Mr. Sheridan's speech on the charges exhibited against Mr. Hastings in the House of Commons. Mr. Pitt entreated the House to adjourn, to give time for a calmer consideration of the question than could then occur after the immediate effect of that oration.

The foe — the fool — the jealous — and the vain,
The envious who but breathe in others' pain,
Behold the host! delighting to deprave
Who track the steps of Glory to the grave,
Watch every fault that daring Genius owes
Half to the ardour which its birth bestows,
Distort the truth, accumulate the lie,
And pile the Pyramid of Calumny!
These are his portion — but if join'd to these
Gaunt Poverty should league with deep Disease,
If the high Spirit must forget to soar,
And stoop to strive with Misery at the door,
To soothe Indignity — and face to face
Meet sordid Rage — and wrestle with Disgrace,
To find in Hope but the renew'd caress,
The serpent-fold of further Faithlessness: —
If such may be the Ills which men assail,
What marvel if at last the mightiest fail?
Breasts to whom all the strength of feeling given
Bear hearts electric — charged with fire from Heaven,
Black with the rude collision, inly torn,
By clouds surrounded, and on whirlwinds borne,
Driven o'er the lowering atmosphere that nurst
Thoughts which have turn'd to thunder — scorch — and burst.

But far from us and from our mimic scene
Such things should be — if such have ever been;
Ours be the gentler wish, the kinder task,
To give the tribute Glory need not ask,
To mourn the vanish'd beam — and add our mite
Of praise in payment of a long delight.
Ye Orators! whom yet our councils yield,
Mourn for the veteran Hero of your field!
The worthy rival of the wondrous *Three!* (1)
Whose words were sparks of Immortality!
Ye Bards! to whom the Drama's Muse is dear,
He was your Master — emulate him *here!*
Ye men of wit and social eloquence!
He was your brother — bear his ashes hence!
While Powers of mind almost of boundless range,
Complete in kind — as various in their change,
While Eloquence — Wit — Poesy — and Mirth,
That humbler Harmonist of care on Earth,

(1) Fox — Pitt — Burke.

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Survive within our souls — while lives our sense
Of pride in Merit's proud pre-eminence,
Long shall we seek his likeness — long in vain,
And turn to all of him which may remain,
Sighing that Nature form'd but one such man,
And broke the die — in moulding Sheridan!

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THE

LAMENT OF TASSO.

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At Ferrara (in the Library) are preserved the original MSS. of Tasso's Gierusalemme and of Guarini's Pastor Fido, with letters of Tasso, one from Titian to Ariosto; and the inkstand and chair, the tomb and the house of the latter. But as misfortune has a greater interest for posterity, and little or none for the contemporary, the cell where Tasso was confined in the hospital of St. Anna attracts a more fixed attention than the residence or the monument of Ariosto — at least it had this effect on me. There are two inscriptions, one on the outer gate, the second over the cell itself, inviting, unnecessarily, the wonder and the indignation of the spectator. Ferrara is much decayed, and depopulated: the castle still exists entire; and I saw the court where Parisina and Hugo were beheaded, according to the annal of Gibbon.

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LAMENT OF TASSO.

I.

Long years! — It tries the thrilling frame to bear
And eagle-spirit of a Child of Song —
Long years of outrage, calumny, and wrong;
Imputed madness, prison'd solitude,
And the mind's canker in its savage mood,
When the impatient thirst of light and air
Parches the heart; and the abhorred grate,
Marring the sunbeams with its hideous shade,
Works through the throbbing eyeball to the brain
With a hot sense of heaviness and pain;
And bare, at once, Captivity display'd
Stands scoffing through the never-open'd gate,
Which nothing through its bars admits, save day,
And tasteless food, which I have eat alone
Till its unsocial bitterness is gone;
And I can banquet like a beast of prey,
Sullen and lonely, couching in the cave
Which is my lair, and — it may be — my grave.
All this hath somewhat worn me, and may wear,
But must be borne. I stoop not to despair;
For I have battled with mine agony,
And made me wings wherewith to overfly
The narrow circus of my dungeon wall,
And freed the Holy Sepulchre from thrall;
And revell'd among men and things divine,
And pour'd my spirit over Palestine,
In honour of the sacred war for Him,
The God who was on earth and is in heaven,
For he hath strengthen'd me in heart and limb.
That through this sufferance I might be forgiven,
I have employed my penance to record
How Salem's shrine was won, and how adored.

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II.

But this is o'er — my pleasant task is done: —
My long-sustaining friend of many years!
If I do blot thy final page with tears,
Know, that my sorrows have wrung from me none.
But thou, my young creation! my soul's child!
Which ever playing round me came and smiled,
And woo'd me from myself with thy sweet sight,
Thou too art gone — and so is my delight:
And therefore do I weep and inly bleed
With this last bruise upon a broken reed.
Thou too art ended — what is left me now?
For I have anguish yet to bear — and how?
I know not that — but in the innate force
Of my own spirit shall be found resource.
I have not sunk, for I had no remorse,
Nor cause for such: they call'd me mad — and why?
Oh Leonora! wilt not *thou* reply?
I was indeed delirious in my heart
To lift my love so lofty as thou art;
But still my frenzy was not of the mind;
I knew my fault, and feel my punishment
Not less because I suffer it unbent.
That thou wert beautiful, and I not blind,
Hath been the sin which shuts me from mankind;
But let them go, or torture as they will,
My heart can multiply thine image still;
Successful love may sate itself away,
The wretched are the faithful; 't is their fate
To have all feeling save the one decay,
And every passion into one dilate,
As rapid rivers into ocean pour;
But ours is fathomless, and hath no shore.

III.

Above me, hark! the long and maniac cry
Of minds and bodies in captivity.
And hark! the lash and the increasing howl,
And the half-inarticulate blasphemy!
There be some here with worse than frenzy foul,
Some who do still goad on the o'er-labour'd mind,
And dim the little light that 's left behind
With needless torture, as their tyrant will
Is wound up to the lust of doing ill:

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With these and with their victims am I class'd,
'Mid sounds and sights like these long years have pass'd;
'Mid sights and sounds like these my life may close:
So let it be — for then I shall repose.

IV.

I have been patient, let me be so yet,
I had forgotten half I would forget,
But it revives — Oh! would it were my lot
To be forgetful as I am forgot! —
Feel I not wroth with those who bade me dwell
In this vast lazar-house of many woes?
Where laughter is not mirth, nor thought the mind,
Nor words a language, nor ev'n men mankind;
Where cries reply to curses, shrieks to blows,
And each is tortured in his separate hell —
For we are crowded in our solitudes —
Many, but each divided by the wall,
Which echoes Madness in her babbling moods; —
While all can hear, none heed his neighbour's call —
None! save that One, the veriest wretch of all,
Who was not made to be the mate of these,
Nor bound between Distraction and Disease.
Feel I not wroth with those who placed me here?
Who have debased me in the minds of men,
Debarring me the usage of my own,
Blighting my life in best of its career,
Branding my thoughts as things to shun and fear?
Would I not pay them back these pangs again,
And teach them inward Sorrow's stifled groan?
The struggle to be calm, and cold distress,
Which undermines our Stoical success?
No! — still too proud to be vindictive — I
Have pardon'd princes' insults, and would die.
Yes, Sister of my Sovereign! for thy sake
I weed all bitterness from out my breast,
It hath no business where *thou* art a guest;
Thy brother hates — but I can not detest;
Thou pitiest not — but I can not forsake.

V.

Look on a love which knows not to despair,
But all unquench'd is still my better part,
Dwelling deep in my shut and silent heart
As dwells the gather'd lightning in its cloud,

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Encompass'd with its dark and rolling shroud,
Till struck, — forth flies the all-ethereal dart!
And thus at the collision of thy name
The vivid thought still flashes through my frame,
And for a moment all things as they were
Flit by me; — they are gone — I am the same.
And yet my love without ambition grew;
I knew thy state, my station, and I knew
A Princess was no love-mate for a bard;
I told it not, I breathed it not, it was
Sufficient to itself, its own reward;
And if my eyes reveal'd it, they, alas!
Were punish'd by the silentness of thine,
And yet I did not venture to repine.
Thou wert to me a crystal-girded shrine,
Worshipp'd at holy distance, and around
Hallow'd and meekly kiss'd the saintly ground;
Not for thou wert a princess, but that Love
Had robed thee with a glory, and array'd
They lineaments in beauty that dismay'd —
Oh! not dismay'd — but awed, like One above,
And in that sweet severity there was
A something which all softness did surpass —
I know not how — thy genius master'd mine —
My star stood still before thee: — if it were
Presumptuous thus to love without design,
That sad fatality hath cost me dear;
But thou art dearest still, and I should be
Fit for this cell, which wrongs me — but for *thee*.
The very love which lock'd me to my chain
Hath lighten'd half its weight; and for the rest,
Though heavy, lent me vigour to sustain,
And look to thee with undivided breast
And foil the ingenuity of Pain.

VI.

It is no marvel — from my very birth
My soul was drunk with love, which did pervade
And mingle with whate'er I saw on earth;
Of objects all inanimate I made
Idols, and out of wild and lonely flowers,
And rocks, whereby they grew, a paradise,
Where I did lay me down within the shade
Of waving trees, and dream'd uncounted hours,
Though I was chid for wandering; and the Wise

Shook their white aged heads o'er me, and said
Of such materials wretched men were made,
And such a truant boy would end in woe,
And that the only lesson was a blow; —
And then they smote me, and I did not weep,
But cursed them in my heart, and to my haunt
Return'd and wept alone, and dream'd again
The visions which arise without a sleep.
And with my years my soul began to pant
With feelings of strange tumult and soft pain;
And the whole heart exhaled into One Want,
But undefined and wandering, till the day
I found the thing I sought, and that was thee;
And then I lost my being all to be
Absorb'd in thine — the world was past away —
Thou didst annihilate the earth to me!

VII.

I loved all Solitude — but little thought
To spend I know not what of life, remote
From all communion with existence, save
The maniac and his tyrant; — had I been
Their fellow, many years ere this had seen
My mind like theirs corrupted to its grave,
But who hath seen me writhe, or heard me rave?
Perchance in such a cell we suffer more
Than the wreck'd sailor on his desert shore;
The world is all before him — *mine* is *here*,
Scarce twice the space they must accord my bier
What though *he* perish, he may lift his eye
And with a dying glance upbraid the sky —
I will not raise my own in such reproof,
Although 't is clouded by my dungeon roof.

VIII.

Yet do I feel at times my mind decline,
But with a sense of its decay: — I see
Unwonted lights along my prison shine,
And a strange demon, who is vexing me
With pilfering pranks and petty pains, below
The feeling of the healthful and the free;
But much to One, who long hath suffer'd so,
Sickness of heart, and narrowness of place,
And all that may be borne, or can debase.

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I thought mine enemies had been but Man,
But Spirits may be leagued with them — all Earth
Abandons — Heaven forgets me; — in the dearth
Of such defence the Powers of Evil can,
It may be, tempt me further, — and prevail
Against the outworn creature they assail.
Why in this furnace is my spirit proved
Like steel in tempering fire? because I loved?
Because I loved what not to love, and see,
Was more or less than mortal, and than me.

IX.

I once was quick in feeling — that is o'er; —
My scars are callous, or I should have dash'd
My brain against these bars as the sun flash'd
In mockery through them; — if I bear and bore
The much I have recounted, and the more
Which hath no words, 't is that I would not die
And sanction with self-slaughter the dull lie
Which snared me here, and with the brand of shame
Stamp Madness deep into my memory,
And woo Compassion to a blighted name,
Sealing the sentence which my foes proclaim.
No — it shall be immortal! — and I make
A future temple of my present cell,
Which nations yet shall visit for my sake.
While thou, Ferrara! when no longer dwell
The ducal chiefs within thee, shalt fall down,
And crumbling piecemeal view thy heartless halls,
A poet's wreath shall be thine only crown, —
A poet's dungeon thy most far renown,
While strangers wonder o'er thy unpeopled walls!
And thou, Leonora! thou — who wert ashamed
That such as I could love — who blush'd to hear
To less than monarchs that thou couldst be dear,
Go! tell thy brother, that my heart, untamed
By grief, years, weariness — and it may be
A taint of that he would impute to me —
From long infection of a den like this,
Where the mind rots congenial with the abyss,
Adores thee still; — and add — that when the towers
And battlements which guard his joyous hours
Of banquet, dance, and revel, are forgot,
Or left untended in a dull repose,
This — this — shall be a consecrated spot!
But Thou — when all that Birth and Beauty throws

Google

Of magic round thee is extinct — shalt have
One half the laurel which o'ershades my grave.
No power in death can tear our names apart,
As none in life could rend thee from my heart.
Yes, Leonora! it shall be our fate
To be entwined for ever — but too late!

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POEMS.

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POEMS.

WRITTEN IN AN ALBUM.

I.

As o'er the cold sepulchral stone
  Some name arrests the passer-by;
Thus, when thou view'st this page alone,
  May mine attract thy pensive eye!

II.

And when by thee that name is read,
  Perchance in some succeeding year,
Reflect on me as on the dead,
  And think my heart is buried here.

September 14*th*, 1809.

TO * * *

Oh Lady! when I left the shore,
  The distant shore, which gave me birth,
I hardly thought to grieve once more,
  To quit another spot on earth:
Yet here, amidst this barren isle,
  Where panting Nature droops the head,
Where only thou art seen to smile,
  I view my parting hour with dread.
Though far from Albin's craggy shore,
  Divided by the dark-blue main;
A few, brief, rolling seasons o'er,
  Perchance I view her cliffs again:
But wheresoe'er I now may roam,
  Through scorching clime, and varied sea,
Though Time restore me to my home,
  I ne'er shall bend mine eyes on thee:

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On thee, in whom at once conspire
All charms which heedless hearts can move,
Whom but to see is to admire,
And, oh! forgive the word — to love.
Forgive the word, in one who ne'er
With such a word can more offend;
And since thy heart I cannot share,
Believe me, what I am, thy friend.
And who so cold as look on thee,
Thou lovely wand'rer, and be less?
Nor be, what man should ever be,
The friend of Beauty in distress?
Ah! who would think that form had past
Through Danger's most destructive path,
Hath braved the Death-wing'd tempest's blast,
And 'scaped a tyrant's fiercer wrath?
Lady! when I shall view the walls
Where free Byzantium once arose,
And Stamboul's Oriental halls
The Turkish tyrants now enclose;
Thou mightiest in the lists of fame,
That glorious city still shall be;
On me 't will hold a dearer claim,
As spot of thy nativity:
And though I bid thee now farewell,
When I behold that wond'rous scene,
Since where thou art I may not dwell,
'T will sooth to be, where thou hast been.

September, 1809.

STANZAS
WRITTEN IN PASSING THE AMBRACIAN GULF.

NOVEMBER 14, 1809.

I.

THROUGH cloudless skies, in silvery sheen,
Full beams the moon on Actium's coast:
And on these waves, for Egypt's queen,
The ancient world was won and lost.

II.

And now upon the scene I look,
The azure grave of many a Roman;

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Where stern Ambition once forsook
His wavering crown to follow woman.

III.

Florence! whom I will love as well
As ever yet was said or sung,
(Since Orpheus sang his spouse from hell)
Whilst thou art fair and I am young;

IV.

Sweet Florence! those were pleasant times,
When worlds were staked for ladies' eyes:
Had bards as many realms as rhymes,
Thy charms might raise new Anthonies.

V.

Though Fate forbids such things to be,
Yet, by thine eyes and ringlets curl'd!
I cannot lose a world for thee,
But would not lose thee for a world.

STANZAS

COMPOSED OCTOBER 11TH, 1809, DURING THE NIGHT, IN A THUNDER-STORM, WHEN THE GUIDES HAD LOST THE ROAD TO ZITZA, NEAR THE RANGE OF MOUNTAINS FORMERLY CALLED PINDUS, IN ALBANIA.

I.

CHILL and mirk is the nightly blast,
Where Pindus' mountains rise,
And angry clouds are pouring fast
The vengeance of the skies.

II.

Our guides are gone, our hope is lost,
And lightnings, as they play,
But show where rocks our path have crost,
Or gild the torrent's spray.

III.

Is yon a cot I saw, though low?
When lightning broke the gloom —
How welcome were its shade! — ah, no!
'T is but a Turkish tomb.

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IV.

Through sounds of foaming waterfalls,
I hear a voice exclaim —
My way-worn countryman, who calls
On distant England's name.

V.

A shot is fired — by foe or friend?
Another — 't is to tell
The mountain-peasants to descend,
And lead us where they dwell.

VI.

Oh! who in such a night will dare
To tempt the wilderness?
And who 'mid thunder peals can hear
Our signal of distress?

VII.

And who that heard our shouts would rise
To try the dubious road?
Nor rather deem from nightly cries
That outlaws were abroad.

VIII.

Clouds burst, skies flash, oh, dreadful hour!
More fiercely pours the storm!
Yet here one thought has still the power
To keep my bosom warm.

IX.

While wand'ring through each broken path,
O'er brake and craggy brow;
While elements exhaust their wrath,
Sweet Florence, where art thou?

X.

Not on the sea, not on the sea,
Thy bark hath long been gone:
Oh, may the storm that pours on me,
Bow down my head alone!

XI.

Full swiftly blew the swift Siroc,
When last I press'd thy lip;

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And long ere now, with foaming shock,
Impell'd thy gallant ship.

XII.

Now thou art safe; nay, long ere now
Hast trod the shore of Spain;
'T were hard if aught so fair as thou
Should linger on the main.

XIII.

And since I now remember thee
In darkness and in dread,
As in those hours of revelry
Which mirth and music sped;

XIV.

Do thou amidst the fair white walls,
If Cadiz yet be free,
At times from out her latticed halls
Look o'er the dark blue sea;

XV.

Then think upon Calypso's isles,
Endear'd by days gone by;
To others give a thousand smiles,
To me a single sigh.

XVI.

And when the admiring circle mark
The paleness of thy face,
A half-form'd tear, a transient spark
Of melancholy grace,

XVII.

Again thou 'lt smile, and blushing shun
Some coxcomb's raillery;
Nor own for once thou thought'st of one,
Who ever thinks on thee.

XVIII.

Though smile and sigh alike are vain,
When sever'd hearts repine,
My spirit flies o'er mount and main,
And mourns in search of thine.

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WRITTEN AT ATHENS,

JANUARY 16, 1810.

THE spell is broke, the charm is flown!
Thus is it with life's fitful fever:
We madly smile when we should groan;
Delirium is our best deceiver.
Each lucid interval of thought
Recalls the woes of Nature's charter,
And he that acts as wise men ought,
But lives, as saints have died, a martyr.

WRITTEN AFTER SWIMMING FROM SESTOS TO ABYDOS,(1)

MAY 9, 1810.

I.

IF, in the month of dark December,
Leander, who was nightly wont
(What maid will not the tale remember?)
To cross thy stream, broad Hellespont!

II.

If, when the wintry tempest roar'd,
He sped to Hero, nothing loth,
And thus of old thy current pour'd,
Fair Venus! how I pity both!

(1) On the 3d of May, 1810, while the Salsette (Captain Bathurst) was lying in the Dardanelles, Lieutenant Ekenhead of that frigate, and the writer of these rhymes, swam from the European shore to the Asiatic—by-the-by, from Abydos to Sestos would have been more correct. The whole distance from the place whence we started to our landing on the other side, including the length we were carried by the current, was computed by those on board the frigate at upwards of four English miles; though the actual breadth is barely one. The rapidity of the current is such that no boat can row directly across, and it may in some measure be estimated from the circumstance of the whole distance being accomplished by one of the parties in an hour and five, and by the other in an hour and ten, minutes. The water was extremely cold from the melting of the mountain snows. About three weeks before, in April, we had made an attempt, but having ridden all the way from the Troad the same morning and the water being of an icy chilness, we found it necessary to postpone the completion till the frigate anchored below the castles, when we swam the straits, as just stated; entering a considerable way above the European, and landing below the Asiatic, fort. Chevalier says that a young Jew swam the same distance for his mistress; and Oliver mentions its having been done by a Neapolitan; but our consul, Tarragona, remembered neither of these circumstances, and tried to dissuade us from the attempt. A number of the Salsette's crew were known to have accomplished a greater distance; and the only thing that surprised me was, that, as doubts had been entertained of the truth of Leander's story, no traveller had ever endeavoured to ascertain its practicability.

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III.

For *me*, degenerate modern wretch,
Though in the genial month of May,
My dripping limbs I faintly stretch,
And think I've done a feat to-day.

IV.

But since he cross'd the rapid tide,
According to the doubtful story,
To woo, — and — Lord knows what beside,
And swam for Love, as I for Glory;

V.

'T were hard to say who fared the best:
Sad mortals! thus the Gods still plague you!
He lost his labour, I my jest:
For he was drown'd, and I 've the ague.

SONG.

Ζώη μοῦ, σάς ἀγαπῶ. (1)

ATHENS, 1810.

I.

Maid of Athens, ere we part,
Give, oh, give me back my heart!
Or, since that has left my breast,
Keep it now, and take the rest!
Hear my vow before I go,
Ζώη μοῦ, σάς ἀγαπῶ.

II.

By those tresses unconfined,
Woo'd by each Ægean wind;

(1) *Zoë mou, sas agapo*, or Ζώη μοῦ, σάς ἀγαπῶ, a Romaic expression of tenderness: if I translate it, I shall affront the gentlemen, as it may seem that I suppose they could not; and if I do not, I may affront the ladies. For fear of any misconstruction on the part of the latter I shall do so, begging pardon of the learned It means, "My life, I love you!" which sounds very prettily in all languages, and is as much in fashion in Greece at this day as, Juvenal tells us, the two first words were among the Roman ladies, whose exotic expressions were all Hellenized.

By those lids whose jetty fringe
Kiss thy soft cheeks' blooming tinge;
By those wild eyes like the roe,
Ζώη μοῦ, σάς ἀγαπῶ.

III.

By that lip I long to taste;
By that zone-encircled waist;
By all the token-flowers (1) that tell
What words can never speak so well;
By Love's alternate joy and woe,
Ζώη μοῦ, σάς ἀγαπῶ

IV.

Maid of Athens! I am gone:
Think of me, sweet! when alone.
Though I fly to Istambol, (2)
Athens holds my heart and soul:
Can I cease to love thee? No!
Ζώη μοῦ, σάς ἀγαπῶ.

TRANSLATION OF THE FAMOUS GREEK WAR SONG,

Δεῦτε παῖδες τῶν Ἑλλήνων,

WRITTEN BY RIGA, WHO PERISHED IN THE ATTEMPT TO REVOLUTIONIZE GREECE. THE FOLLOWING TRANSLATION IS AS LITERAL AS THE AUTHOR COULD MAKE IT IN VERSE; IT IS OF THE SAME MEASURE AS THAT OF THE ORIGINAL. SEE PAGE 52.

I.

Sons of the Greeks, arise!
The glorious hour 's gone forth,
And, worthy of such ties,
Display who gave us birth.

CHORUS.

Sons of Greeks! let us go
In arms against the foe,
Till their hated blood shall flow
In a river past our feet.

(1) In the East (where ladies are not taught to write, lest they should scribble assignations) flowers, cinders, pebbles, &c., convey the sentiments of the parties by that universal deputy of Mercury—an old woman. A cinder says, "I burn for thee;" a bunch of flowers tied with hair, "Take me and fly;" but a pebble declares — what nothing else can.

(2) Constantinople.

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II.

Then manfully despising
The Turkish tyrant's yoke,
Let your country see you rising,
And all her chains are broke.
Brave shades of chiefs and sages,
Behold the coming strife!
Hellénes of past ages,
Oh start again to life!
At the sound of my trumpet, breaking
Your sleep, oh, join with me!
And the seven-hill'd (1) city seeking,
Fight, conquer, till we 're free.
Sons of Greeks, &c.

III.

Sparta, Sparta, why in slumbers
Lethargic dost thou lie?
Awake, and join thy numbers
With Athens, old ally!
Leonidas recalling,
That chief of ancient song,
Who saved ye once from falling,
The terrible! the strong!
Who made that bold diversion
In old Thermopylæ,
And warring with the Persian
To keep his country free;
With his three hundred waging
The battle, long he stood,
And like a lion raging,
Expired in seas of blood.
Sons of Greeks, &c.

(1) Constantinople. "Ἑπτάλοφος."

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TRANSLATION OF THE ROMAIC SONG,

"Μπενω μες 'τσ' πέριβόλι
'Ωραιότατη Χαηδή," &c.

THE SONG FROM WHICH THIS IS TAKEN IS A GREAT FAVOURITE WITH THE YOUNG GIRLS OF ATHENS, OF ALL CLASSES. THEIR MANNER OF SINGING IT IS BY VERSES IN ROTATION, THE WHOLE NUMBER PRESENT JOINING IN THE CHORUS. I HAVE HEARD IT FREQUENTLY AT OUR "χόροι" IN THE WINTER OF 1810-11. THE AIR IS PLAINTIVE AND PRETTY.

I.

I ENTER thy garden of roses,
Beloved and fair Haidée,
Each morning where Flora reposes,
For surely I see her in thee.
Oh, Lovely! thus low I implore thee,
Receive this fond truth from my tongue,
Which utters its song to adore thee,
Yet trembles for what it has sung;
As the branch, at the bidding of Nature,
Adds fragrance and fruit to the tree,
Through her eyes, through her every feature,
Shines the soul of the young Haidée.

II.

But the loveliest garden grows hateful
When Love has abandon'd the bowers;
Bring me hemlock — since mine is ungrateful.
That herb is more fragrant than flowers.
The poison, when pour'd from the chalice,
Will deeply imbitter the bowl;
But when drunk to escape from thy malice,
The draught shall be sweet to my soul.
Too cruel! in vain I implore thee
My heart from these horrors to save:
Will naught to my bosom restore thee?
Then open the gates of the grave.

III.

As the chief who to combat advances
Secure of his conquest before,
Thus thou, with those eyes for thy lances,
Hast pierced through my heart to its core.
Ah, tell me, my soul! must I perish
By pangs which a smile would dispel?
Would the hope, which thou once bad'st me cherish,
For torture repay me too well?

Google

Now sad is the garden of roses,
Beloved but false Haidée!
There Flora all wither'd reposes,
And mourns o'er thine absence with me.

WRITTEN BENEATH A PICTURE.

I.

Dear object of defeated care!
Though not of Love and thee bereft,
To reconcile me with despair
Thine image and my tears are left.

II.

'T is said with Sorrow Time can cope;
But this I feel can ne'er be true:
For by the death-blow of my Hope
My Memory immortal grew.

ON PARTING.

I.

The kiss, dear maid! thy lip has left,
Shall never part from mine,
Till happier hours restore the gift
Untainted back to thine.

II.

Thy parting glance, which fondly beams,
An equal love may see:
The tear that from thine eyelid streams
Can weep no change in me.

III.

I ask no pledge to make me blest
In gazing when alone;
Nor one memorial for a breast,
Whose thoughts are all thine own.

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IV.

Nor need I write — to tell the tale
My pen were doubly weak:
Oh! what can idle words avail,
Unless the heart could speak?

V.

By day or night, in weal or woe,
That heart, no longer free,
Must bear the love it cannot show
And silent ache for thee.

TO THYRZA.

Without a stone to mark the spot,
And say, what truth might well have said
By all, save one, perchance forgot,
Ah, wherefore art thou lowly laid?
By many a shore and many a sea
Divided, yet beloved in vain;
The past, the future fled to thee
To bid us meet — no — ne'er again!
Could this have been — a word, a look
That softly said, "We part in peace,"
Had taught my bosom how to brook,
With fainter sighs, thy soul's release.
And didst thou not, since Death for thee
Prepared a light and pangless dart,
Once long for him thou ne'er shalt see,
Who held, and holds thee in his heart?
Oh! who like him had watch'd thee here?
Or sadly mark'd thy glazing eye,
In that dread hour ere death appear,
When silent sorrow fears to sigh,
Till all was past? But when no more
'T was thine to reck of human woe,
Affection's heart-drops, gushing o'er,
Had flow'd as fast — as now they flow.
Shall they not flow, when many a day
In these, to me, deserted towers,
Ere call'd but for a time away,
Affection's mingling tears were ours?

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Ours too the glance none saw beside ;
The smile none else might understand ;
The whisper'd thought of hearts allied,
The pressure of the thrilling hand ;
The kiss, so guiltless and refined
That Love each warmer wish forbore ;
Those eyes proclaim'd so pure a mind,
Even passion blush'd to plead for more.
The tone, that taught me to rejoice,
When prone, unlike thee to repine ;
The song, celestial from thy voice,
But sweet to me from none but thine ;
The pledge we wore — I wear it still,
But where is thine ? — ah, where art thou ?
Oft have I borne the weight of ill,
But never bent beneath till now !
Well hast thou left in life's best bloom
The cup of woe for me to drain,
If rest alone be in the tomb,
I would not wish thee here again ;
But if in worlds more blest than this
Thy virtues seek a fitter sphere,
Impart some portion of thy bliss,
To wean me from mine anguish here.
Teach me — too early taught by thee !
To bear, forgiving and forgiven
On earth thy love was such to me ;
It fain would form my hope in heaven !

STANZAS.

I.

Away, away, ye notes of woe :
Be silent, thou once soothing strain,
Or I must flee from hence, for, oh !
I dare not trust those sounds again.
To me they speak of brighter days —
But lull the chords, for now, alas !
I must not think, I may not gaze
On what I am — on what I was.

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II.

The voice that made those sounds more sweet
  Is hush'd, and all their charms are fled;
And now their softest notes repeat
  A dirge, an anthem o'er the dead!
Yes, Thyrza! yes, they breathe of thee,
  Beloved dust! since dust thou art;
And all that once was harmony
  Is worse than discord to my heart!

III.

'T is silent all! — but on my ear
  The well-remember'd echoes thrill;
I hear a voice I would not hear,
  A voice that now might well be still:
Yet oft my doubting soul 't will shake;
  Even slumber owns its gentle tone,
Till consciousness will vainly wake
  To listen, though the dream be flown.

IV.

Sweet Thyrza! waking as in sleep,
  Thou art but now a lovely dream;
A star that trembled o'er the deep,
  Then turn'd from earth its tender beam.
But he, who through life's dreary way
  Must pass, when heaven is veil'd in wrath
Will long lament the vanish'd ray
  That scatter'd gladness o'er his path.

TO THYRZA.

I.

One struggle more, and I am free
  From pangs that rend my heart in twain;
One last long sigh to love and thee
  Then back to busy life again.
It suits me well to mingle now
  With things that never pleased before:
Though every joy is fled below,
  What future grief can touch me more?

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II.

Then bring me wine, the banquet bring
Man was not form'd to live alone:
I 'll be that light unmeaning thing
That smiles with all, and weeps with none.
It was not thus in days more dear,
It never would have been, but thou
Hast fled, and left me lonely here;
Thou 'rt nothing, all are nothing now.

III.

In vain my lyre would lightly breathe!
The smile that sorrow fain would wear
But mocks the woe that lurks beneath,
Like roses o'er a sepulchre.
Though gay companions o'er the bowl
Dispel awhile the sense of ill;
Though pleasure fires the maddening soul,
The heart — the heart is lonely still!

IV.

On many a lone and lovely night
It sooth'd to gaze upon the sky;
For then I deem'd the heavenly light
Shone sweetly on thy pensive eye:
And oft I thought at Cynthia's noon,
When sailing o'er the Ægean wave,
"Now Thyrza gazes on that moon —"
Alas, it gleam'd upon her grave!

V.

When stretch'd on fever's sleepless bed,
And sickness shrunk my throbbing veins,
"'T is comfort still," I faintly said,
"That Thyrza cannot know my pains:"
Like freedom to the time-worn slave,
A boon 't is idle then to give,
Relenting Nature vainly gave,
My life, when Thyrza ceased to live!

VI.

My Thyrza's pledge in better days,
When love and life alike were new!
How different now thou meet'st my gaze!
How tinged by time with sorrow's hue!

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The heart that gave itself with thee
Is silent — ah, were mine as still!
Though cold as e'en the dead can be,
It feels, it sickens with the chill.

VII.

Thou bitter pledge! thou mournful token!
Though painful, welcome to my breast!
Still, still, preserve that love unbroken,
Or break the heart to which thou 'rt prest!
Time tempers love, but not removes,
More hallow'd when its hope is fled:
Oh! what are thousand living loves
To that which cannot quit the dead?

EUTHANASIA.

I.

When Time, or soon or late, shall bring
The dreamless sleep that lulls the dead.
Oblivion! may thy languid wing
Wave gently o'er my dying bed!

II.

No band of friends or heirs be there,
To weep, or wish, the coming blow:
No maiden, with dishevell'd hair,
To feel, or feign, decorous woe.

III.

But silent let me sink to Earth,
With no officious mourners near:
I would not mar one hour of mirth,
Nor startle friendship with a fear.

IV.

Yet Love, if Love in such an hour
Could nobly check its useless sighs,
Might then exert its latest power
In her who lives and him who dies.

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V.

'T were sweet, my Psyche! to the last
Thy features still serene to see:
Forgetful of its struggles past,
E'en Pain itself should smile on thee.

VI.

But vain the wish — for Beauty still
Will shrink, as shrinks the ebbing breath;
And woman's tears, produced at will,
Deceive in life, unman in death.

VII.

Then lonely be my latest hour,
Without regret, without a groan!
For thousands Death hath ceased to lower,
And pain been transient or unknown.

VIII.

"Ay, but to die, and go," alas!
Where all have gone, and all must go!
To be the nothing that I was
Ere born to life and living woe!

IX.

Count o'er the joys thine hours have seen,
Count o'er thy days from anguish free,
And know, whatever thou hast been
'T is something better not to be.

STANZAS.

"HEU QUANTO MINUS EST CUM RELIQUIS VERSARI QUAM TUI MEMINISSE."

I.

And thou art dead, as young and fair
As aught of mortal birth;
And form so soft, and charms so rare,
Too soon return'd to Earth!
Though Earth received them in her bed,
And o'er the spot the crowd may tread
In carelessness or mirth.
There is an eye which could not brook
A moment on that grave to look.

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II.

I will not ask where thou liest low
  Nor gaze upon the spot;
There flowers or weeds at will may grow,
  So I behold them not:
It is enough for me to prove
That what I loved and long must love
  Like common earth can rot;
To me there needs no stone to tell,
'T is Nothing that I loved so well.

III.

Yet did I love thee to the last
  As fervently as thou,
Who didst not change through all the past,
  And canst not alter now.
The love where Death has set his seal,
Nor age can chill, nor rival steal,
  Nor falsehood disavow:
And, what were worse, thou canst not see,
Or wrong, or change, or fault in me.

IV.

The better days of life were ours;
  The worst can be but mine:
The sun that cheers, the storm that lowers,
  Shall never more be thine.
The silence of that dreamless sleep
I envy now too much to weep,
  Nor need I to repine
That all those charms have pass'd away;
I might have watch'd through long decay.

V.

The flower in ripen'd bloom unmatch'd
  Must fall the earliest prey;
Though by no hand untimely snatch'd,
  The leaves must drop away:
And yet it were a greater grief
To watch it withering, leaf by leaf,
  Than see it pluck'd to-day;
Since earthly eye but ill can bear
To trace the change to foul from fair.

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VI.

I know not if I could have borne
To see thy beauties fade;
The night that follow'd such a morn
Had worn a deeper shade:
Thy day without a cloud hath pass'd,
And thou wert lovely to the last;
Extinguish'd, not decay'd;
As stars that shoot along the sky
Shine brightest as they fall from high.

VII.

As once I wept, if I could weep,
My tears might well be shed,
To think I was not near to keep
One vigil o'er thy bed;
To gaze, how fondly! on thy face,
To fold thee in a faint embrace,
Uphold thy drooping head;
And show that love, however vain,
Nor thou nor I can feel again.

VIII.

Yet how much less it were to gain,
Though thou hast left me free,
The loveliest things that still remain,
Than thus remember thee!
The all of thine that cannot die
Through dark and dread Eternity,
Returns again to me,
And more thy buried love endears
Than aught, except its living years.

STANZAS.

I.

If sometimes in the haunts of men
Thine image from my breast may fade,
The lonely hour presents again
The semblance of thy gentle shade:
And now that sad and silent hour
Thus much of thee can still restore,
And sorrow unobserved may pour
The plaint she dare not speak before.

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II.

Oh, pardon that in crowds awhile,
I waste one thought I owe to thee,
And, self-condemn'd, appear to smile,
Unfaithful to thy Memory!
Nor deem that memory less dear,
That then I seem not to repine;
I would not fools should overhear
One sigh that should be wholly *thine*.

III.

If not the goblet pass unquaff'd,
It is not drain'd to banish care;
The cup must hold a deadlier draught,
That brings a Lethe for despair.
And could Oblivion set my soul
From all her troubled visions free,
I 'd dash to earth the sweetest bowl
That drown'd a single thought of thee.

IV.

For wert thou vanish'd from my mind,
Where could my vacant bosom turn?
And who would then remain behind,
To honour thine abandon'd Urn?
No, no — it is my sorrow's pride
That last dear duty to fulfil;
Though all the world forget beside,
'T is meet that I remember still.

V.

For well I know, that such had been
Thy gentle care for him, who now
Unmourn'd shall quit this mortal scene,
Where none regarded him, but thou;
And, oh! I feel in *that* was given
A blessing never meant for me;
Thou wert too like a dream of Heaven,
For earthly love to merit thee.

March 14*th*, 1812.

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ON A CORNELIAN HEART WHICH WAS BROKEN.

I.

Ill-fated Heart! and can it be
That thou shouldst thus be rent in twain?
Have years of care for thine and thee
Alike been all employ'd in vain?

II.

Yet precious seems each shatter'd part,
And every fragment dearer grown,
Since he who wears thee feels thou art
A fitter emblem of *his own*.

TO A YOUTHFUL FRIEND

I.

Few years have pass'd since thou and I
Were firmest friends, at least in name,
And childhood's gay sincerity
Preserved our feelings long the same.

II.

But now, like me, too well thou know'st
What trifles oft the heart recall;
And those who once have lov'd the most,
Too soon forget they loved at all.

III.

And such the change the heart displays,
So frail is early friendship's reign,
A month's brief lapse, perhaps a day's,
Will view thy mind estranged again.

IV.

If so, it never shall be mine
To mourn the loss of such a heart;
The fault was Nature's fault, not thine,
Which made thee fickle as thou art.

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V.

As rolls the ocean's changing tide,
So human feelings ebb and flow;
And who would in a breast confide
Where stormy passions ever glow?

VI.

It boots not, that together bred,
Our childish days were days of joy:
My spring of life has quickly fled;
Thou, too, hast ceased to be a boy.

VII.

And when we bid adieu to youth,
Slaves to the specious world's control,
We sigh a long farewell to truth;
That world corrupts the noblest soul.

VIII.

Ah, joyous season! when the mind
Dares all things boldly but to lie;
When thought ere spoke is unconfined,
And sparkles in the placid eye.

IX.

Not so in Man's maturer years,
When man himself is but a tool;
When interest sways our hopes and fears
And all must love and hate by rule.

X.

With fools in kindred vice the same,
We learn at length our faults to blend;
And those, and those alone, may claim
The prostituted name of friend.

XI.

Such is the common lot of man:
Can we then 'scape from folly free?
Can we reverse the general plan,
Nor be what all in turn must be?

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XII.

No, for myself, so dark my fate
Through every turn of life hath been;
Man and the world I so much hate,
I care not when I quit the scene.

XIII.

But thou, with spirit frail and light,
Wilt shine awhile and pass away;
As glow-worms sparkle through the night,
But dare not stand the test of day.

XIV.

Alas! whenever folly calls
Where parasites and princes meet,
(For cherish'd first in royal halls,
The welcome vices kindly greet,)

XV.

Ev'n now thou 'rt nightly seen to add
One insect to the fluttering crowd;
And still thy trifling heart is glad
To join the vain, and court the proud.

XVI.

There dost thou glide from fair to fair,
Still simpering on with eager haste,
As flies along the gay parterre,
That taint the flowers they scarcely taste.

XVII.

But say, what nymph will prize the flame
Which seems, as marshy vapours move,
To flit along from dame to dame,
An ignis-fatuus gleam of love?

XVIII.

What friend for thee, howe'er inclined,
Will deign to own a kindred care?
Who will debase his manly mind,
For friendship every fool may share?

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XIX.

In time forbear; amidst the throng,
No more so base a thing be seen;
No more so idly pass along:
Be something, any thing, but — mean.

TO * * * * * *

I.

Well! thou art happy, and I feel
That I should thus be happy too;
For still my heart regards thy weal
Warmly, as it was wont to do.

II.

Thy husband's blest — and 't will impart
Some pangs to view his happier lot:
But let them pass — Oh! how my heart
Would hate him, if he loved thee not!

III.

When late I saw thy favourite child,
I thought my jealous heart would break;
But when th' unconscious infant smiled,
I kiss'd it for its mother's sake.

IV.

I kiss'd it, and repress'd my sighs,
Its father in its face to see;
But then it had its mother's eyes,
And they were all to love and me.

V.

Mary, adieu! I must away:
While thou art blest I 'll not repine,
But near thee I can never stay;
My heart would soon again be thine.

VI.

I deem'd that time, I deem'd that pride
Had quench'd at length my boyish flame,
Nor knew, till seated by thy side,
My heart in all, save hope, the same.

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VII.

Yet was I calm: I knew the time
My breast would thrill before thy look,
But now to tremble were a crime —
We met, and not a nerve was shook.

VIII.

I saw thee gaze upon my face,
Yet meet with no confusion there:
One only feeling could'st thou trace;
The sullen calmness of despair.

IX.

Away! away! my early dream,
Remembrance never must awake:
Oh! where is Lethe's fabled stream?
My foolish heart be still, or break.

FROM THE PORTUGUESE.

In moments to delight devoted,
"My life!" with tend'rest tone, you cry;
Dear words! on which my heart had doted,
If youth could neither fade nor die.
To death even hours like these must roll,
Ah! then repeat those accents never;
Or change "my life!" into "my soul!"
Which, like my love, exists for ever.

IMPROMPTU, IN REPLY TO A FRIEND.

When from the heart where Sorrow sits,
Her dusky shadow mounts too high,
And o'er the changing aspect flits,
And clouds the brow or fills the eye.
Heed not that gloom, which soon shall sink:
My thoughts their dungeon know too well;
Back to my breast the wanderers shrink,
And droop within their silent cell.

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ADDRESS,

SPOKEN AT THE OPENING OF DRURY-LANE THEATRE, SATURDAY, OCTOBER 10, 1812.

In one dread night our city saw, and sigh'd,
Bow'd to the dust, the Drama's tower of pride;
In one short hour beheld the blazing fane,
Apollo sink, and Shakspeare cease to reign.

Yet who beheld, (oh! sight admired and mourn'd
Whose radiance mock'd the ruin it adorn'd!)
Through clouds of fire the massy fragments riven,
Like Israel's pillar, chase the night from heaven;
Saw the long column of revolving flames
Shake its red shadow o'er the startled Thames,
While thousands, throng'd around the burning dome,
Shrank back appall'd, and trembled for their home,
As glared the volumed blaze, and ghastly shone
The skies, with lightnings awful as their own,
Till blackening ashes and the lonely wall
Usurp'd the Muse's realm, and mark'd her fall;
Say — shall this new, nor less aspiring pile,
Rear'd where once rose the mightiest in our isle,
Know the same favour which the former knew,
A shrine for Shakspeare — worthy him and *you?*

Yes — it shall be — the magic of that name
Defies the scythe of time, the torch of flame;
On the same spot still consecrates the scene,
And bids the Drama *be* where she hath *been.*
This fabric's birth attests the potent spell —
Indulge our honest pride, and say, *How well!*

As soars this fane to emulate the last,
Oh! might we draw our omens from the past,
Some hour propitious to our prayers may boast
Names such as hallow still the dome we lost.
On Drury first your Siddons' thrilling art
O'erwhelm'd the gentlest, storm'd the sternest heart.
On Drury, Garrick's latest laurels grew;
Here your last tears retiring Roscius drew,
Sigh'd his last thanks, and wept his last adieu:
But still for living wit the wreaths may bloom
That only waste their odours o'er the tomb.

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Such Drury claim'd and claims — nor you refuse
One tribute to revive his slumbering muse;
With garlands deck your own Menander's head!
Nor hoard your honours idly for the dead!

Dear are the days which made our annals bright,
Ere Garrick fled, or Brinsley ceased to write.
Heirs to their labours, like all high-born heirs,
Vain of *our* ancestry as they of *theirs*;
While thus Remembrance borrows Banquo's glass
To claim the sceptred shadows as they pass,
And we the mirror hold, where imaged shine
Immortal names, emblazon'd on our line,
Pause — ere their feebler offspring you condemn,
Reflect how hard the task to rival them!

Friends of the stage! to whom both Players and Plays
Must sue alike for pardon or for praise,
Whose judging voice and eye alone direct
The boundless power to cherish or reject;
If e'er frivolity has led to fame,
And made us blush that you forbore to blame;
If e'er the sinking stage could condescend
To soothe the sickly taste it dare not mend,
All past reproach may present scenes refute,
And censure, wisely loud, be justly mute!
Oh! since your fiat stamps the Drama's laws,
Forbear to mock us with misplaced applause;
So pride shall doubly nerve the actor's powers,
And reason's voice be echo'd back by ours!

This greeting o'er, the ancient rule obey'd,
The Drama's homage by her herald paid,
Receive *our* welcome too, whose every tone
Springs from our hearts, and fain would win your own.
The curtain rises — may our stage unfold
Scenes not unworthy Drury's days of old!
Britons our judges, Nature for our guide,
Still may *we* please — long, long may *you* preside!

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TO TIME.

Time! on whose arbitrary wing
The varying hours must flag or fly,
Whose tardy winter, fleeting spring,
But drag or drive us on to die—

Hail thou! who on my mirth bestow'd
Those boons to all that know thee known;
Yet better I sustain thy load,
For now I bear the weight alone.

I would not one fond heart should share
The bitter moments thou hast given;
And pardon thee, since thou could'st spare
All that I loved, to peace or heaven.

To them be joy or rest, on me
Thy future ills shall press in vain;
I nothing owe but years to thee,
A debt already paid in pain.

Yet even that pain was some relief;
It felt, but still forgot thy power:
The active agony of grief
Retards, but never counts the hour.

In joy I've sigh'd to think thy flight
Would soon subside from swift to slow;
Thy cloud could overcast the light,
But could not add a night to woe;

For then, however drear and dark,
My soul was suited to thy sky;
One star alone shot forth a spark
To prove thee — not Eternity.

That beam hath sunk, and now thou art
A blank; a thing to count and curse
Through each dull tedious trifling part,
Which all regret, yet all rehearse.

One scene even thou canst not deform;
The limit of thy sloth or speed
When future wanderers bear the storm
Which we shall sleep too sound to heed:

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And I can smile to think how weak
Thine efforts shortly shall be shown,
When all the vengeance thou canst wreak
Must fall upon — a nameless stone.

TRANSLATION OF A ROMAIC LOVE SONG.

Ah! Love was never yet without
The pang, the agony, the doubt,
Which rends my heart with ceaseless sigh,
While day and night roll darkling by.

Without one friend to hear my woe,
I faint, I die beneath the blow.
That Love had arrows, well I knew;
Alas! I find them poison'd too.

Birds, yet in freedom shun the net
Which Love around your haunts hath set;
Or, circled by his fatal fire,
Your hearts shall burn, your hopes expire.

A bird of free and careless wing
Was I, through many a smiling spring;
But caught within the subtle snare,
I burn, and feebly flutter there.

Who ne'er have loved, and loved in vain,
Can neither feel nor pity pain,
The cold repulse, the look askance,
The lightning of Love's angry glance.

In flattering dreams I deem'd thee mine;
Now hope, and he who hoped, decline;
Like melting wax, or withering flower,
I feel my passion, and thy power.

My light of life! ah, tell me why
That pouting lip, and alter'd eye?
My bird of love! my beauteous mate!
And art thou changed, and canst thou hate?

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Mine eyes like wintry streams o'erflow:
What wretch with me would barter woe?
My bird! relent: one note could give
A charm, to bid thy lover live.

My curdling blood, my madd'ning brain,
In silent anguish I sustain;
And still thy heart, without partaking
One pang, exults — while mine is breaking.

Pour me the poison; fear not thou!
Thou canst not murder more than now:
I 've lived to curse my natal day,
And Love, that thus can lingering slay.

My wounded soul, my bleeding breast,
Can patience preach thee into rest?
Alas! too late, I dearly know
That joy is harbinger of woe.

STANZAS.

Thou art not false, but thou art fickle,
To those thyself so fondly sought;
The tears that thou hast forced to trickle
Are doubly bitter from that thought:
'T is this which breaks the heart thou grievest
Too well thou lov'st — too soon thou leavest.

The wholly false the heart despises,
And spurns deceiver and deceit;
But she who not a thought disguises,
Whose love is as sincere as sweet, —
When she can change who loved so truly,
It feels what mine has felt so newly.

To dream of joy and wake to sorrow,
Is doom'd to all who love or live;
And if, when conscious on the morrow,
We scarce our fancy can forgive,
That cheated us in slumber only,
To leave the waking soul more lonely,

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What must they feel whom no false vision,
But truest, tenderest passion warm'd?
Sincere, but swift in sad transition,
As if a dream alone had charm'd?
Ah! sure such grief is fancy's scheming,
And all thy change can be but dreaming!

ON BEING ASKED WHAT WAS THE "ORIGIN OF LOVE."

The "Origin of Love!" — Ah, why
That cruel question ask of me,
When thou may'st read in many an eye
He starts to life on seeing thee?

And should'st thou seek his *end* to know:
My heart forebodes, my fears foresee,
He 'll linger long in silent woe;
But live — until I cease to be.

STANZAS.

["REMEMBER HIM," &c.]

Remember him, whom passion's power
Severely, deeply, vainly proved:
Remember thou that dangerous hour
When neither fell, though both were loved.

That yielding breast, that melting eye,
Too much invited to be bless'd:
That gentle prayer, that pleading sigh,
The wilder wish reproved, repress'd.

Oh! let me feel that all I lost
But saved thee all that conscience fears:
And blush for every pang it cost
To spare the vain remorse of years.

Yet think of this when many a tongue,
Whose busy accents whisper blame,
Would do the heart that loved thee wrong,
And brand a nearly blighted name.

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Think that, whate'er to others, thou
Hast seen each selfish thought subdued:
I bless thy purer soul even now,
Even now, in midnight solitude.

Oh, God! that we had met in time,
Our hearts as fond, thy hand more free;
When thou hadst loved without a crime,
And I been less unworthy thee!

Far may thy days, as heretofore,
From this our gaudy world be past!
And that too bitter moment o'er,
Oh! may such trial be thy last!

This heart, alas! perverted long,
Itself destroy'd might there destroy;
To meet thee in the glittering throng,
Would wake Presumption's hope of joy.

Then to the things whose bliss or woe,
Like mine is wild and worthless all,
That world resign — such scenes forego,
Where those who feel must surely fall.

Thy youth, thy charms, thy tenderness,
Thy soul from long seclusion pure;
From what even here hath pass'd, may guess
What there thy bosom must endure.

Oh! pardon that imploring tear,
Since not by Virtue shed in vain,
My frenzy drew from eyes so dear;
For me they shall not weep again.

Though long and mournful must it be,
The thought that we no more may meet;
Yet I deserve the stern decree,
And almost deem the sentence sweet.

Still, had I loved thee less, my heart
Had then less sacrificed to thine;
It felt not half so much to part,
As if its guilt had made thee mine.

1813.

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LINES

INSCRIBED UPON A CUP FORMED FROM A SKULL.

START not — nor deem my spirit fled:
In me behold the only skull,
From which, unlike a living head,
Whatever flows is never dull.

I lived, I loved, I quaff'd, like thee;
I died; let earth my bones resign:
Fill up — thou canst not injure me;
The worm hath fouler lips than thine.

Better to hold the sparkling grape,
Than nurse the earth-worm's slimy brood;
And circle in the goblet's shape
The drink of Gods, than reptile's food.

Where once my wit, perchance, hath shone,
In aid of others' let me shine;
And when, alas! our brains are gone,
What nobler substitute than wine?

Quaff while thou canst — another race,
When thou and thine like me are sped,
May rescue thee from earth's embrace,
And rhyme and revel with the dead.

Why not? since through life's little day
Our heads such sad effects produce;
Redeem'd from worms and wasting clay,
This chance is theirs, to be of use.

Newstead Abbey, 1808.

ON THE DEATH OF SIR PETER PARKER, BART.

THERE is a tear for all that die,
A mourner o'er the humblest grave;
But nations swell the funeral cry,
And Triumph weeps above the brave.

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For them is Sorrow's purest sigh
O'er Ocean's heaving bosom sent:
In vain their bones unburied lie,
All earth becomes their monument!

A tomb is theirs on every page,
An epitaph on every tongue:
The present hours, the future age,
For them bewail, to them belong.

For them the voice of festal mirth
Grows hush'd, *their name* the only sound;
While deep Remembrance pours to Worth
The goblet's tributary round.

A theme to crowds that knew them not,
Lamented by admiring foes,
Who would not share their glorious lot?
Who would not die the death they chose?

And, gallant Parker! thus enshrined
Thy life, thy fall, thy fame shall be;
And early valour, glowing, find
A model in thy memory.

But there are breasts that bleed with thee
In woe, that glory cannot quell;
And shuddering hear of victory,
Where one so dear, so dauntless, fell.

Where shall they turn to mourn thee less?
When cease to hear thy cherish'd name?
Time cannot teach forgetfulness,
While Grief's full heart is fed by Fame.

Alas! for them, though not for thee,
They cannot choose but weep the more;
Deep for the dead the grief must be,
Who ne'er gave cause to mourn before.

October, 1814.

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TO A LADY WEEPING.

Weep, daughter of a royal line,
A Sire's disgrace, a realm's decay;
Ah, happy! if each tear of thine
Could wash a father's fault away!

Weep — for thy tears are Virtue's tears —
Auspicious to these suffering isles;
And be each drop in future years
Repaid thee by thy people's smiles!

March, 1812.

THE CHAIN I GAVE.

(*From the Turkish.*)

The chain I gave was far to view,
The lute I added sweet in sound;
The heart that offer'd both was true,
And ill deserved the fate it found.

These gifts were charm'd by secret spell
Thy truth in absence to divine;
And they have done their duty well, —
Alas! they could not teach thee thine.

That chain was firm in every link,
But not to bear a stranger's touch;
That lute was sweet — till thou could'st think,
In other hands its notes were such.

Let him, who from thy neck unbound
The chain which shiver'd in his grasp,
Who saw that lute refuse to sound,
Restring the chords, renew the clasp.

When thou wert changed, they alter'd too;
The chain is broke, the music mute.
'T is past — to them and thee adieu —
False heart, frail chain, and silent lute.

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SONNET, TO GENEVRA.

THINE eyes' blue tenderness, thy long fair hair,
And the wan lustre of thy features — caught
From contemplation — where serenely wrought,
Seems Sorrow's softness charm'd from its despair —
Have thrown such speaking sadness in thine air,
That — but I know thy blessed bosom fraught
With mines of unalloy'd and stainless thought —
I should have deem'd thee doom'd to earthly care.
With such an aspect, by his colours blent,
When from his beauty-breathing pencil born,
(Except that *thou* hast nothing to repent,)
The Magdalen of Guido saw the morn —
Such seem'st thou — but how much more excellent!
With nought Remorse can claim — nor Virtue scorn.

December 17, 1813.

SONNET TO THE SAME.

THY cheek is pale with thought, but not from woe
And yet so lovely, that if Mirth could flush
Its rose of whiteness with the brightest blush,
My heart would wish away that ruder glow:
And dazzle not thy deep-blue eyes — but, oh!
While gazing on them sterner eyes will gush,
And into mine my mother's weakness rush,
Soft as the last drops round heaven's airy bow.
For, through thy long dark lashes low depending,
The soul of melancholy Gentleness
Gleams like a seraph from the sky descending,
Above all pain, yet pitying all distress;
At once such majesty with sweetness blending,
I worship more, but cannot love thee less.

December 17, 1813.

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INSCRIPTION

ON THE MONUMENT OF A NEWFOUNDLAND DOG.

"NEAR THIS SPOT
ARE DEPOSITED THE REMAINS OF ONE
WHO POSSESSED BEAUTY WITHOUT VANITY,
STRENGTH WITHOUT INSOLENCE,
COURAGE WITHOUT FEROCITY,
AND ALL THE VIRTUES OF MAN WITHOUT HIS VICES.
THIS PRAISE, WHICH WOULD BE UNMEANING FLATTERY
IF INSCRIBED OVER HUMAN ASHES,
IS BUT A JUST TRIBUTE TO THE MEMORY OF
BOATSWAIN, A DOG,
WHO WAS BORN AT NEWFOUNDLAND, MAY 1803,
AND DIED AT NEWSTEAD ABBEY, NOV. 18, 1808."

When some proud son of man returns to earth,
Unknown to glory, but upheld by birth,
The sculptor's art exhausts the pomp of woe,
And storied urns record who rests below;
When all is done, upon the tomb is seen,
Not what he was, but what he should have been:
But the poor dog, in life the firmest friend,
The first to welcome, foremost to defend,
Whose honest heart is still his master's own,
Who labours, fights, lives, breathes for him alone,
Unhonour'd falls, unnoticed all his worth,
Denied in heaven the soul he held on earth:
While man, vain insect! hopes to be forgiven,
And claims himself a sole exclusive heaven.
Oh man! thou feeble tenant of an hour,
Debased by slavery, or corrupt by power,
Who knows thee well must quit thee with disgust,
Degraded mass of animated dust!
Thy love is lust, thy friendship all a cheat,
Thy smiles, hypocrisy, thy words deceit!
By nature vile, ennobled but by name,
Each kindred brute might bid thee blush for shame.
Ye! who perchance behold this simple urn,
Pass on — it honours none you wish to mourn:
To mark a friend's remains these stones arise;
I never new but one, and here he lies.

Newstead Abbey, Oct. 30, 1808.

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FAREWELL.

FAREWELL! if ever fondest prayer
For other's weal avail'd on high,
Mine will not all be lost in air,
But waft thy name beyond the sky.
'T were vain to speak, to weep, to sigh;
Oh! more than tears of blood can tell.
When wrung from Guilt's expiring eye,
Are in that word — Farewell! — Farewell!

These lips are mute, these eyes are dry;
But in my breast, and in my brain,
Awake the pangs that pass not by,
The thought that ne'er shall sleep again.
My soul nor deigns nor dares complain.
Though grief and passion there rebel;
I only know we loved in vain —
I only feel — Farewell! — Farewell!

I.

BRIGHT be the place of thy soul!
No lovelier spirit than thine
E'er burst from its mortal control,
In the orbs of the blessed to shine.
On earth thou wert all but divine,
As thy soul shall immortally be;
And our sorrow may cease to repine,
When we know that thy God is with thee.

II.

Light be the turf of thy tomb!
May its verdure like emeralds be:
There should not be the shadow of gloom,
In aught that reminds us of thee.
Young flowers and an evergreen tree
May spring from the spot of thy rest:
But nor cypress nor yew let us see;
For why should we mourn for the blest?

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I.

When we two parted
In silence and tears,
Half broken-hearted
To sever for years,
Pale grew thy cheek and cold,
Colder thy kiss;
Truly that hour foretold
Sorrow to this.

II.

The dew of the morning
Sunk chill on my brow —
It felt like the warning
Of what I feel now.
Thy vows are all broken,
And light is thy fame;
I hear thy name spoken,
And share in its shame.

III.

They name thee before me,
A knell to mine ear;
A shudder comes o'er me —
Why wert thou so dear?
They know not I knew thee,
Who knew thee too well: —
Long, long shall I rue thee,
Too deeply to tell.

IV.

In secret we met —
In silence I grieve,
That thy heart could forget,
Thy spirit deceive.
If I should meet thee
After long years,
How should I greet thee? —
With silence and tears.

1808.

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STANZAS FOR MUSIC.*

[" THERE'S NOT A JOY THE WORLD CAN GIVE," &c.]

"O Lachrymarum fons, tenero sacros
Ducentium ortus ex animo : quater
Felix ! in imo qui scatentem
Pectore te, pia Nympha, sensit."

GRAY'S *Poemata.*

THERE 's not a joy the world can give like that it takes away,
When the glow of early thought declines in feeling's dull decay;
'T is not on youth's smooth cheek the blush alone, which fades so fast,
But the tender bloom of heart is gone, ere youth itself be past.
Then the few whose spirits float above the wreck of happiness
Are driven o'er the shoals of guilt or ocean of excess :
The magnet of their course is gone, or only points in vain
The shore to which their shiver'd sail shall never stretch again.

Then the mortal coldness of the soul like death itself comes down;
It cannot feel for others' woes, it dare not dream its own ;
That heavy chill has frozen o'er the fountain of our tears,
And though the eye may sparkle still, 't is where the ice appears.
Though wit may flash from fluent lips, and mirth distract the breast,
Through midnight hours that yield no more their former hope of rest ;
'T is but as ivy-leaves around the ruin'd turret wreath,
All green and wildly fresh without, but worn and gray beneath.

Oh could I feel as I have felt, — or be what I have been,
Or weep as I could once have wept, o'er many a vanish'd scene :
As springs in deserts found seem sweet, all brackish though they be,
So, midst the wither'd waste of life, those tears would flow to me.

March, 1815.

* These verses were given by Lord Byron to Mr Power, of the Strand, who has published them, with very beautiful music by Sir John Stevenson.

Google

STANZAS FOR MUSIC.

["THERE BE NONE OF BEAUTY'S DAUGHTERS."]

THERE be none of Beauty's daughters
With a magic like thee;
And like music on the waters
Is thy sweet voice to me:
When, as if its sound were causing
The charmed ocean's pausing,
The waves lie still and gleaming,
And the lull'd winds seem dreaming.

And the midnight moon is weaving
Her bright chain o'er the deep;
Whose breast is gently heaving,
As an infant's asleep:
So the spirit bows before thee,
To listen and adore thee;
With a full but soft emotion,
Like the swell of Summer's ocean.

FARE THEE WELL.

"Alas! they had been friends in Youth;
But whispering tongues can poison truth,
And constancy lives in realms above:
And Life is thorny; and youth is vain:
And to be wroth with one we love,
Doth work like madness in the brain:
* * * * * * *
But never either found another
To free the hollow heart from paining —
They stood aloof, the scars remaining,
Like cliffs, which had been rent asunder;
A dreary sea now flows between,
But neither heat, nor frost, nor thunder
Shall wholly do away, I ween,
The marks of that which once hath been."

COLERIDGE'S *Christabel*.

FARE thee well! and if for ever,
Still for ever, fare *thee well*:
Even though unforgiving, never
'Gainst thee shall my heart rebel.

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Would that breast were bared before thee
Where thy head so oft hath lain,
While that placid sleep came o'er thee
Which thou ne'er canst know again:

Would that breast, by thee glanced over,
Every inmost thought could show!
Then thou would'st at last discover
'T was not well to spurn it so.

Though the world for this commend thee —
Though it smile upon the blow,
Even its praises must offend thee,
Founded on another's woe:

Though my many faults defaced me,
Could no other arm be found,
Than the one which once embraced me,
To inflict a cureless wound?

Yet, oh yet, thyself deceive not;
Love may sink by slow decay,
But by sudden wrench, believe not
Hearts can thus be torn away:

Still thine own its life retaineth —
Still must mine, though bleeding, beat;
And the undying thought which paineth
Is — that we no more may meet.

These are words of deeper sorrow
Than the wail above the dead;
Both shall live, but every morrow
Wake us from a widow'd bed.

And when thou would solace gather
When our child's first accents flow,
Wilt thou teach her to say "Father!"
Though his care she must forego?

When her little hands shall press thee,
When her lip to thine is press'd,
Think of him whose prayer shall bless thee,
Think of him thy love had bless'd!

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Should her lineaments resemble
Those thou never more may'st see,
Then thy heart will softly tremble
With a pulse yet true to me.

All my faults perchance thou knowest,
All my madness none can know;
All my hopes, where'er thou goest,
Wither, yet with *thee* they go.

Every feeling hath been shaken;
Pride, which not a world could bow,
Bows to thee — by thee forsaken,
Even my soul forsakes me now:

But 't is done — all words are idle —
Words from me are vainer still;
But the thoughts we cannot bridle
Force their way without the will. —

Fare thee well! — thus disunited,
Torn from every nearer tie,
Sear'd in heart, and lone, and blighted
More than this I scarce can die.

March, 17, 1816.

A SKETCH. (1)

"Honest — Honest Iago!
If that thou be'st a devil, I cannot kill thee." — SHAKSPEARE.

Born in the garret, in the kitchen bred,
Promoted thence to deck her mistress' head;
Next — for some gracious service unexpress'd,
And from its wages only to be guess'd —
Raised from the toilet to the table, — where
Her wondering betters wait behind her chair.
With eye unmoved, and forehead unabash'd,
She dines from off the plate she lately wash'd.
Quick with the tale, and ready with the lie —
The genial confidante, and general spy —
Who could, ye gods! her next employment guess —
An only infant's earliest governess!

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(1) Mrs. Charlmont.

She taught the child to read, and taught so well,
That she herself, by teaching, learn'd to spell.
An adept next in penmanship she grows,
As many a nameless slander deftly shows:
What she had made the pupil of her art,
None know — but that high Soul secured the heart,
And panted for the truth it could not hear,
With longing breast and undeluded ear.
Foil'd was perversion by that youthful mind,
Which Flattery fool'd not — Baseness could not blind,
Deceit infect not — near Contagion soil —
Indulgence weaken — nor Example spoil —
Nor master'd Science tempt her to look down
On humbler talents with a pitying frown —
Nor Genius swell — nor Beauty render vain —
Nor Envy ruffle to retaliate pain —
Nor Fortune change — Pride raise — nor Passion bow
Nor Virtue teach austerity — till now.
Serenely purest of her sex that live,
But wanting one sweet weakness — to forgive,
Too shock'd at faults her soul can never know,
She deems that all could be like her below:
Foe to all vice, yet hardly Virtue's friend,
For Virtue pardons those she would amend.

But to the theme: — now laid aside too long
The baleful burthen of this honest song —
Though all her former functions are no more,
She rules the circle which she served before.
If mothers — none know why — before her quake;
If daughters dread her for the mothers' sake;
If early habits — those false links, which bind
At times the loftiest to the meanest mind —
Have given her power too deeply to instil;
The angry essence of her deadly will;
If like a snake she steal within your walls,
Till the black slime betray her as she crawls
If like a viper to the heart she wind,
And leave the venom there she did not find;
What marvel that this hag of hatred works
Eternal evil latent as she lurks,
To make a Pandemonium where she dwells,
And reign the Hecate of domestic hells?
Skill'd by a touch to deepen scandal's tints
With all the kind mendacity of hints

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While mingling truth with falsehood — sneers with smiles —
A thread of candour with a web of wiles ;
A plain blunt show of briefly-spoken seeming,
To hide her bloodless heart's soul-harden'd scheming ;
A lip of lies — a face form'd to conceal ;
And, without feeling, mock at all who feel :
With a vile mask the Gorgon would disown ;
A cheek of parchment — and an eye of stone.
Mark, how the channels of her yellow blood
Ooze to her skin, and stagnate there to mud,
Cased like the centipede in saffron mail,
Or darker greenness of the scorpion's scale —
(For drawn from reptiles only may we trace
Congenial colours in that soul or face) —
Look on her features ! and behold her mind
As in a mirror of itself defined :
Look on the picture ! deem it not o'ercharged —
There is no trait which might not be enlarged :
Yet true to " Nature's journeymen," who made
This monster when their mistress left off trade —
This female dog-star of her little sky,
Where all beneath her influence droop or die.

Oh ! wretch without a tear — without a thought,
Save joy above the ruin thou hast wrought —
The time shall come, nor long remote, when thou
Shalt feel far more than thou inflictest now ;
Feel for thy vile self-loving self in vain,
And turn thee howling in unpitied pain.
May the strong curse of crush'd affections light
Back on thy bosom with reflected blight !
And make thee in thy leprosy of mind
As loathsome to thyself as to mankind !
Till all thy self-thoughts curdle into hate,
Black — as thy will for others would create :
Till thy hard heart be calcined into dust,
And thy soul welter in its hideous crust.
Oh, may thy grave be sleepless as the bed, —
The widow'd couch of fire, that thou hast spread !
Then, when thou fain wouldst weary Heaven with prayer.
Look on thine earthly victims — and despair !
Down to the dust ! — and, as thou rott'st away,
Even worms shall perish on thy poisonous clay.
But for the love I bore, and still must bear,
To her thy malice from all ties would tear —

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Thy name — thy human name — to every eye
The climax of all scorn should hang on high,
Exalted o'er thy less abhorr'd compeers —
And festering in the infamy of years.

TO ——— *

[WHEN ALL AROUND," &c.]

I.

When all around grew drear and dark,
And reason half withheld her ray —
And hope but shed a dying spark
Which more misled my lonely way;

II.

In that deep midnight of the mind,
And that internal strife of heart,
When dreading to be deem'd too kind,
The weak despair — the cold depart;

III.

When fortune changed — and love fled far,
And hatred's shafts flew thick and fast,
Thou wert the solitary star
Which rose and set not to the last.

IV.

Oh! blest be thine unbroken light!
That watch'd me as a seraph's eye,
And stood between me and the night,
For ever shining sweetly nigh.

V.

And when the cloud upon us came,
Which strove to blacken o'er thy ray —
Then purer spread its gentle flame,
And dash'd the darkness all away.

VI.

Still may thy spirit dwell on mine,
And teach it what to brave or brook —
There 's more in one soft word of thine
Than in the world's defied rebuke.

(1) His sister Mrs. Leigh.

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VII.

Thou stood'st, as stands a lovely tree,
That still unbroke, though gently bent,
Still waves with fond fidelity
Its boughs above a monument.

VIII.

The winds might rend — the skies might pour,
But there thou wert — and still would'st be
Devoted in the stormiest hour
To shed thy weeping leaves o'er me.

IX.

But thou and thine shall know no blight,
Whatever fate on me may fall;
For heaven in sunshine will requite
The kind — and thee the most of all.

X.

Then let the ties of baffled love
Be broken — thine will never break;
Thy heart can feel — but will not move;
Thy soul, though soft, will never shake.

XI.

And these, when all was lost beside,
Were found and still are fix'd in thee; —
And bearing still a breast so tried,
Earth is no desert — ev'n to me.

ODE FROM THE FRENCH.

["WE DO NOT CURSE THEE WATERLOO!"]

I.

We do not curse thee, Waterloo!
Though Freedom's blood thy plain bedew;
There 't was shed, but is not sunk —
Rising from each gory trunk,
Like the water-spout from ocean,
With a strong and growing motion —
It soars, and mingles in the air,
With that of lost Labedoyère —
With that of him whose honour'd grave
Contains the "bravest of the brave."
A crimson cloud it spreads and glows,
But shall return to whence it rose;

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When 't is full 't will burst asunder —
Never yet was heard such thunder
As then shall shake the world with wonder —
Never yet was seen such lightning
As o'er heaven shall then be bright'ning!
Like the Wormwood Star foretold
By the sainted Seer of old,
Show'ring down a fiery flood,
Turning rivers into blood. (1)

II.

The Chief has fallen, but not by you,
Vanquishers of Waterloo!
When the soldier citizen
Sway'd not o'er his fellow-men —
Save in deeds that led them on
Where Glory smiled on Freedom's son —
Who, of all the despot's banded,
With that youthful chief competed?
Who could boast o'er France defeated,
Till lone Tyranny commanded?
Till, goaded by ambition's sting,
The Hero sunk into the King?
Then he fell: — so perish all,
Who would men by man enthral!

III.

And thou, too, of the snow-white plume!
Whose realm refused thee ev'n a tomb; (2)
Better hadst thou still been leading
France o'er hosts of hirelings bleeding,
Than sold thyself to death and shame
For a meanly royal name;
Such as he of Naples wears,
Who thy blood-bought title bears.

(1) See Rev. chap. viii. verse 7, &c. "The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood," &c.

Verse 8, "And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea; and the third part of the sea became blood," &c.

Verse 10. "And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp; and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters."

Verse 11. "And the name of the star is called *Wormwood:* and the third part of the waters became *wormwood;* and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter."

(2) Murat's remains are said to have been torn from the grave and burnt.

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Little didst thou deem, when dashing
On thy war-horse through the ranks
Like a stream which burst its banks,
While helmets cleft, and sabres clashing,
Shone and shiver'd fast around thee —
Of the fate at last which found thee:
Was that haughty plume laid low
By a slave's dishonest blow?
Once — as the Moon sways o'er the tide,
It roll'd in air, the warrior's guide;
Through the smoke-created night
Of the black and sulphurous fight,
The soldier raised his seeking eye
To catch that crest's ascendency, —
And, as it onward rolling rose,
So moved his heart upon our foes.
There, where death's brief pang was quickest,
And the battle's wreck lay thickest,
Strew'd beneath the advancing banner
Of the eagle's burning crest —
(There with thunder-clouds to fan her,
Who could then her wing arrest —
Victory beaming from her breast?)
While the broken line enlarging
Fell, or fled along the plain;
There be sure was MURAT charging!
There he ne'er shall charge again!

IV.

O'er glories gone the invaders march,
Weeps Triumph o'er each levell'd arch —
But let Freedom rejoice,
With her heart in her voice;
But, her hand on her sword,
Doubly shall she be adored;
France hath twice too well been taught
The "moral lesson" dearly bought —
Her safety sits not on a throne,
With CAPET or NAPOLEON!
But in equal rights and laws,
Hearts and hands in one great cause —
Freedom, such as God hath given
Unto all beneath his heaven,
With their breath, and from their birth,
Though Guilt would sweep it from the earth;

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With a fierce and lavish hand
Scattering nations' wealth like sand;
Pouring nations' blood like water,
In imperial seas of slaughter!

V.

But the heart and the mind,
And the voice of mankind,
Shall arise in communion —
And who shall resist that proud union?
The time is past when swords subdued —
Man may die — the soul's renew'd:
Even in this low world of care
Freedom ne'er shall want an heir;
Millions breathe but to inherit
Her for ever bounding spirit —
When once more her hosts assemble,
Tyrants shall believe and tremble —
Smile they at this idle threat!
Crimson tears will follow yet.

FROM THE FRENCH.

["MUST THOU GO, MY GLORIOUS CHIEF?"]

I.

MUST thou go, my glorious Chief, (1)
Sever'd from thy faithful few?
Who can tell thy warrior's grief,
Maddening o'er that long adieu?
Woman's love, and friendship's zeal,
Dear as both have been to me —
What are they to all I feel,
With a soldier's faith for thee?

II.

Idol of the soldier's soul!
First in fight, but mightiest now:
Many could a world control;
Thee alone no doom can bow.

(1) "All wept, but particularly Savary, and a Polish officer who had been exalted from the ranks by Buonaparte. He clung to his master's knees; wrote a letter to Lord Keith, entreating permission to accompany him, even in the most menial capacity, which could not be admitted."

By thy side for years I dared
Death; and envied those who fell,
When their dying shout was heard,
Blessing him they served so well. (1)

III.

Would that I were cold with those,
Since this hour I live to see;
When the doubts of coward foes
Scarce dare trust a man with thee,
Dreading each should set thee free!
Oh! although in dungeons pent,
All their chains were light to me,
Gazing on thy soul unbent.

IV.

Would the sycophants of him
Now so deaf to duty's prayer,
Were his borrow'd glories dim,
In his native darkness share?
Were that world this hour his own,
All thou calmly dost resign,
Could he purchase with that throne
Hearts like those which still are thine?

V.

My chief, my king, my friend, adieu!
Never did I droop before;
Never to my sovereign sue,
As his foes I now implore:
All I ask is to divide
Every peril he must brave;
Sharing by the hero's side
His fall, his exile, and his grave.

(1) "At Waterloo, one man was seen, whose left arm was shattered by a cannon ball, to wrench it off with the other, and throwing it up in the air, exclaimed to his comrades, 'Vive l'Empereur, jusqu'à la mort!' There were many other instances of the like; this you may, however, depend on as true."—*A private Letter from Brussels.*

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ON THE STAR OF "THE LEGION OF HONOUR."

[FROM THE FRENCH.]

STAR of the brave! — whose beam hath shed
Such glory o'er the quick and dead —
Thou radiant and adored deceit!
Which millions rush'd in arms to greet, —
Wild meteor of immortal birth!
Why rise in Heaven to set on Earth?

Souls of slain heroes form'd thy rays;
Eternity flash'd through thy blaze;
The music of thy martial sphere
Was fame on high and honour here;
And thy light broke on human eyes,
Like a volcano of the skies.

Like lava roll'd thy stream of blood,
And swept down empires with its flood;
Earth rock'd beneath thee to her base,
As thou didst lighten through all space,
And the shorn Sun grew dim in air,
And set while thou wert dwelling there.

Before thee rose, and with thee grew,
A rainbow of the loveliest hue
Of three bright colours, (1) each divine,
And fit for that celestial sign;
For Freedom's hand had blended them,
Like tints in an immortal gem.

One tint was of the sunbeam's dyes;
One, the blue depth of Seraph's eyes;
One, the pure Spirit's veil of white
Had robed in radiance of its light:
The three so mingled did beseem
The texture of a heavenly dream.

Star of the brave! thy ray is pale,
And darkness must again prevail!

(1) The tri-colour.

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But, oh thou Rainbow of the free!
Our tears and blood must flow for thee.
When thy bright promise fades away,
Our life is but a load of clay.

And Freedom hallows with her tread
The silent cities of the dead;
For beautiful in death are they
Who proudly fall in her array;
And soon, oh Goddess! may we be
For evermore with them or thee!

NAPOLEON'S FAREWELL.

[FROM THE FRENCH.]

I.

FAREWELL to the Land, where the gloom of my Glory
Arose and o'ershadow'd the earth with her name —
She abandons me now — but the page of her story,
The brightest or blackest, is fill'd with my fame.
I have warr'd with a world which vanquish'd me only
When the meteor of conquest allured me too far;
I have coped with the nations which dread me thus lonely,
The last single Captive to millions in war.

II.

Farewell to thee, France! when thy diadem crown'd me,
I made thee the gem and the wonder of earth, —
But thy weakness decrees I should leave as I found thee,
Decay'd in thy glory, and sunk in thy worth.
Oh! for the veteran hearts that were wasted
In strife with the storm, when their battles were won —
Then the Eagle, whose gaze in that moment was blasted,
Had still soar'd with eyes fix'd on victory's sun!

III.

Farewell to thee, France! — but when Liberty rallies
Once more in thy regions, remember me then, —
The violet still grows in the depth of thy valleys;
Though wither'd, thy tears will unfold it again —
Yet, yet, I may baffle the hosts that surround us,
And yet may thy heart leap awake to my voice — [us,
There are links which must break in the chain that has bound
Then turn thee and call on the Chief of thy choice!

WRITTEN ON A BLANK LEAF OF "THE PLEASURES OF MEMORY."

ABSENT or present, still to thee,
My friend, what magic spells belong!
As all can tell, who share, like me,
In turn thy converse, and thy song.
But when the dreaded hour shall come
By Friendship ever deem'd too nigh,
And "MEMORY" o'er her Druid's tomb
Shall weep that aught of thee can die,
How fondly will she then repay
Thy homage offer'd at her shrine,
And blend, while ages roll away,
Her name immortally with *thine!*

April 19, 1812.

SONNET.

ROUSSEAU — Voltaire — our Gibbon — and de Staël —
(1) Leman! these names are worthy of thy shore,
Thy shore of names like these! wert thou no more,
Their memory thy remembrance would recall;
To them thy banks were lovely as to all,
But they have made them lovelier, for the lore
Of mighty minds doth hallow in the core
Of human hearts the ruin of a wall
Where dwelt the wise and wond'rous; but by *thee*
How much more, Lake of Beauty! do we feel,
In sweetly gliding o'er thy crystal sea,
The wild glow of that not ungentle zeal,
Which of the heirs of immortality
Is proud, and makes the breath of glory rea

(1) Geneva, Ferney, Coppet, Lausanne.

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STANZAS TO ——.*

I.

THOUGH the day of my destiny 's over,
And the star of my fate hath declined,
Thy soft heart refused to discover
The faults which so many could find;
Though thy soul with my grief was acquainted,
It shrunk not to share it with me,
And the love which my spirit hath painted
It never hath found but in *thee*.

II.

Then when nature around me is smiling,
The last smile which answers to mine,
I do not believe it beguiling,
Because it reminds me of thine;
And when winds are at war with the ocean,
As the breasts I believed in with me,
If their billows excite an emotion,
It is that they bear me from *thee*.

III.

Though the rock of my last hope is shiver'd,
And its fragments are sunk in the wave,
Though I feel that my soul is deliver'd
To pain — it shall not be its slave.
There is many a pang to pursue me:
They may crush, but they shall not contemn —
They may torture, but shall not subdue me —
'T is of *thee* that I think — not of them.

IV.

Though human, thou didst not deceive me,
Though woman, thou didst not forsake,
Though loved, thou forborest to grieve me,
Though slander'd, thou never couldst shake, —
Though trusted, thou didst not disclaim me,
Though parted, it was not to fly,
Though watchful, 't was not to defame me,
Nor, mute, that the world might belie.

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* His sister, Mrs. Leigh.

V.

Yet I blame not the world, nor despise it,
Nor the war of the many with one —
If my soul was not fitted to prize it,
'T was folly not sooner to shun:
And if dearly that error hath cost me,
And more than I once could foresee,
I have found that, whatever it lost me,
It could not deprive me of *thee*.

VI.

From the wreck of the past, which hath perish'd,
Thus much I at least may recall,
It hath taught me that what I most cherish'd
Deserved to be dearest of all:
In the desert a fountain is springing,
In the wide waste there still is a tree,
And a bird in the solitude singing,
Which speaks to my spirit of *thee*.

July 24, 1816.

DARKNESS.

I HAD a dream, which was not all a dream.
The bright sun was extinguish'd, and the stars
Did wander darkling in the eternal space,
Rayless, and pathless, and the icy earth
Swung blind and blackening in the moonless air;
Morn came, and went — and came, and brought no day,
And men forgot their passions in the dread
Of this their desolation; and all hearts
Were chill'd into a selfish prayer for light:
And they did live by watchfires — and the thrones,
The palaces of crowned kings — the huts,
The habitations of all things which dwell,
Were burnt for beacons; cities were consumed,
And men were gather'd round their blazing homes
To look once more into each other's face;
Happy were those who dwelt within the eye
Of the volcanos, and their mountain-torch:
A fearful hope was all the world contain'd;
Forests were set on fire — but hour by hour
They fell and faded — and the crackling trunks
Extinguish'd with a crash — and all was black.

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The brows of men by the despairing light
Wore an unearthly aspect, as by fits
The flashes fell upon them; some lay down
And hid their eyes and wept; and some did rest
Their chins upon their clenched hands, and smiled;
And others hurried to and fro, and fed
Their funeral piles with fuel, and look'd up
With mad disquietude on the dull sky,
The pall of a past world; and then again
With curses cast them down upon the dust,
And gnash'd their teeth and howl'd: the wild birds shriek'd,
And, terrified, did flutter on the ground,
And flap their useless wings; the wildest brutes
Came tame and tremulous; and vipers crawl'd
And twined themselves among the multitude,
Hissing, but stingless — they were slain for food:
And War, which for a moment was no more,
Did glut himself again; — a meal was bought
With blood, and each sate sullenly apart
Gorging himself in gloom: no love was left;
All earth was but one thought — and that was death,
Immediate and inglorious; and the pang
Of famine fed upon all entrails — men
Died, and their bones were tombless as their flesh;
The meagre by the meagre were devour'd,
Even dogs assail'd their masters, all save one,
And he was faithful to a corse, and kept
The birds and beasts and famish'd men at bay,
Till hunger clung them, or the dropping dead
Lured their lank jaws; himself sought out no food,
But with a piteous and perpetual moan,
And a quick desolate cry, licking the hand
Which answer'd not with a caress — he died.
The crowd was famish'd by degrees; but two
Of an enormous city did survive,
And they were enemies; they met beside
The dying embers of an altar-place
Where had been heap'd a mass of holy things
For an unholy usage; they raked up,
And shivering scraped with their cold skeleton hands
The feeble ashes, and their feeble breath
Blew for a little life, and made a flame
Which was a mockery; then they lifted up
Their eyes as it grew lighter, and beheld
Each other's aspects — saw, and shriek'd, and died —
Even of their mutual hideousness they died,

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Unknowing who he was upon whose brow
Famine had written Fiend. The world was void,
The populous and the powerful was a lump,
Seasonless, herbless, treeless, manless, lifeless —
A lump of death — a chaos of hard clay.
The rivers, lakes, and ocean all stood still,
And nothing stirr'd within their silent depths;
Ships sailorless lay rotting on the sea,
And their masts fell down piecemeal; as they dropp'd
They slept on the abyss without a surge —
The waves were dead; the tides were in their grave,
The Moon, their mistress, had expired before;
The winds were wither'd in the stagnant air,
And the clouds perish'd; Darkness had no need
Of aid from them — She was the universe.

Diodati, July, 1816.

CHURCHILL'S GRAVE.

A FACT LITERALLY RENDERED.

I stood beside the grave of him who blazed
The comet of a season, and I saw
The humblest of all sepulchres, and gazed
With not the less of sorrow and of awe
On that neglected turf and quiet stone,
With name no clearer than the names unknown,
Which lay unread around it; and I ask'd
The Gardener of that ground, why it might be
That for this plant strangers his memory task'd
Through the thick deaths of half a century;
And thus he answer'd — "Well, I do not know
Why frequent travellers turn to pilgrims so;
He died before my day of Sextonship,
And I had not the digging of this grave."
And is this all? I thought, — and do we rip
The veil of Immortality? and crave
I know not what of honour and of light
Through unborn ages, to endure this blight?
So soon and so successless? As I said,
The Architect of all on which we tread,

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For Earth is but a tombstone, did essay
To extricate remembrance from the clay,
Whose minglings might confuse a Newton's thought,
Were it not that all life must end in one,
Of which we are but dreamers; — as he caught
As 't were the twilight of a former Sun,
Thus spoke he, — "I believe the man of whom
You wot, who lies in this selected tomb,
Was a most famous writer in his day,
And therefore travellers step from out their way
To pay him honour, — and myself whate'er
Your honour pleases," — then most pleased I shook
From out my pocket's avaricious nook
Some certain coins of silver, which as 't were
Perforce I gave this man, though I could spare
So much but inconveniently: — Ye smile,
I see ye, ye profane ones! all the while,
Because my homely phrase the truth would tell.
You are the fools, not I — for I did dwell
With a deep thought, and with a soften'd eye,
On that Old Sexton's natural homily,
In which there was Obscurity and Fame, —
The Glory and the Nothing of a Name.

Diodati, 1816.

THE DREAM.

I.

Our life is twofold: Sleep hath its own world,
A boundary between the things misnamed
Death and existence: Sleep hath its own world,
And a wide realm of wild reality,
And dreams in their developement have breath,
And tears, and tortures, and the touch of joy;
They leave a weight upon our waking thoughts,
They take a weight from off our waking toils,
They do divide our being; they become
A portion of ourselves as of our time,
And look like heralds of eternity;
They pass like spirits of the past, — they speak
Like sibyls of the future; they have power —
The tyranny of pleasure and of pain;

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They make us what we were not — what they will,
And shake us with the vision that 's gone by,
The dread of vanish'd shadows — Are they so?
Is not the past all shadow? What are they?
Creations of the mind? — The mind can make
Substance, and people planets of its own
With beings brighter than have been, and give
A breath to forms which can outlive all flesh.
I would recall a vision which I dream'd
Perchance in sleep — for in itself a thought,
A slumbering thought, is capable of years,
And curdles a long life into one hour.

II.

I saw two beings in the hues of youth
Standing upon a hill, a gentle hill,
Green and of mild declivity, the last
As 't were the cape of a long ridge of such,
Save that there was no sea to lave its base,
But a most living landscape, and the wave
Of woods and cornfields, and the abodes of men
Scatter'd at intervals, and wreathing smoke
Arising from such rustic roofs; — the hill
Was crown'd with a peculiar diadem
Of trees, in circular array, so fix'd,
Not by the sport of nature, but of man:
These two, a maiden and a youth, were there
Gazing — the one on all that was beneath
Fair as herself — but the boy gazed on her;
And both were young, and one was beautiful:
And both were young — yet not alike in youth.
As the sweet moon on the horizon's verge,
The maid was on the eve of womanhood;
The boy had fewer summers, but his heart
Had far outgrown his years, and to his eye
There was but one beloved face on earth,
And that was shining on him; he had look'd
Upon it till it could not pass away;
He had no breath, nor being, but in hers;
She was his voice; he did not speak to her,
But trembled on her words; she was his sight,
For his eye follow'd hers, and saw with hers,
Which colour'd all his objects: — he had ceased
To live within himself; she was his life,
The ocean to the river of his thoughts,

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Which terminated all: upon a tone,
A touch of hers, his blood would ebb and flow,
And his cheek change tempestuously — his heart
Unknowing of its cause of agony.
But she in these fond feelings had no share:
Her sighs were not for him; to her he was
Even as a brother — but no more; 't was much,
For brotherless she was, save in the name
Her infant friendship had bestow'd on him;
Herself the solitary scion left
Of a time-honour'd race. — It was a name
Which pleased him, and yet pleased him not — and why?
Time taught him a deep answer — when she loved
Another; even *now* she loved another,
And on the summit of that hill she stood
Looking afar if yet her lover's steed
Kept pace with her expectancy, and flew.

III.

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.
There was an ancient mansion, and before
Its walls there was a steed caparison'd:
Within an antique Oratory stood
The Boy of whom I spake; — he was alone,
And pale, and pacing to and fro: anon
He sate him down, and seized a pen, and traced
Words which I could not guess of; then he lean'd
His bow'd head on his hands, and shook as 't were
With a convulsion — then arose again,
And with his teeth and quivering hands did tear
What he had written, but he shed no tears.
And he did calm himself, and fix his brow
Into a kind of quiet: as he paused,
The Lady of his love re-enter'd there;
She was serene and smiling then, and yet
She knew she was by him beloved, — she knew,
For quickly comes such knowledge, that his heart
Was darken'd with her shadow, and she saw
That he was wretched, but she saw not all.
He rose, and with a cold and gentle grasp
He took her hand; a moment o'er his face
A tablet of unutterable thoughts
Was traced, and then it faded, as it came;
He dropp'd the hand he held, and with slow steps
Retired, but not as bidding her adieu,

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For they did part with mutual smiles; he pass'd
From out the massy gate of that old Hall,
And mounting on his steed he went his way;
And ne'er repass'd that hoary threshold more.

IV.

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.
The Boy was sprung to manhood: in the wilds
Of fiery climes he made himself a home,
And his Soul drank their sunbeams: he was girt
With strange and dusky aspects; he was not
Himself like what he had been; on the sea
And on the shore he was a wanderer;
There was a mass of many images
Crowded like waves upon me, but he was
A part of all; and in the last he lay
Reposing from the noontide sultriness,
Couch'd among fallen columns, in the shade
Of ruin'd walls that had survived the names
Of those who rear'd them; by his sleeping side
Stood camels grazing, and some goodly steeds
Were fasten'd near a fountain; and a man
Clad in a flowing garb did watch the while,
While many of his tribe slumber'd around:
And they were canopied by the blue sky,
So cloudless, clear, and purely beautiful,
That God alone was to be seen in Heaven.

V.

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.
The Lady of his love was wed with One
Who did not love her better: — in her home,
A thousand leagues from his, — her native home,
She dwelt, begirt with growing Infancy,
Daughters and sons of Beauty, — but behold!
Upon her face there was the tint of grief,
The settled shadow of an inward strife,
And an unquiet drooping of the eye
As if its lid were charged with unshed tears.
What could her grief be? — she had all she loved,
And he who had so loved her was not there
To trouble with bad hopes, or evil wish,
Or ill-repress'd affliction, her pure thoughts.
What could her grief be? — she had loved him not,
Nor given him cause to deem himself beloved,

Google

Nor could he be a part of that which prey'd
Upon her mind — a spectre of the past.

VI.

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.
The Wanderer was return'd. — I saw him stand
Before an Altar — with a gentle bride;
Her face was fair, but was not that which made
The Starlight of his Boyhood; — as he stood
Even at the altar, o'er his brow there came
The selfsame aspect, and the quivering shock
That in the antique Oratory shook
His bosom in its solitude; and then —
As in that hour — a moment o'er his face
The tablet of unutterable thoughts
Was traced, — and then it faded as it came,
And he stood calm and quiet, and he spoke
The fitting vows, but heard not his own words,
And all things reel'd around him; he could see
Not that which was, nor that which should have been —
But the old mansion, and the accustom'd hall,
And the remember'd chambers, and the place,
The day, the hour, the sunshine, and the shade,
All things pertaining to that place and hour,
And her who was his destiny, came back
And thrust themselves between him and the light:
What business had they there at such a time?

VII.

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.
The Lady of his love; — Oh! she was changed
As by the sickness of the soul; her mind
Had wander'd from its dwelling, and her eyes
They had not their own lustre, but the look
Which is not of the earth; she was become
The queen of a fantastic realm; her thoughts
Were combinations of disjointed things;
And forms impalpable and unperceived
Of others' sight familiar were to hers.
And this the world calls frenzy; but the wise
Have a far deeper madness, and the glance
Of melancholy is a fearful gift;
What is it but the telescope of truth?
Which strips the distance of its fantasies
And brings life near in utter nakedness,
Making the cold reality too real!

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VIII.

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.
The Wanderer was alone as heretofore,
The beings which surrounded him were gone,
Or were at war with him; he was a mark
For blight and desolation, compass'd round
With Hatred and Contention; Pain was mix'd
In all which was served up to him, until,
Like to the Pontic monarch of old days, (1)
He fed on poisons, and they had no power,
But were a kind of nutriment; he lived
Through that which had been death to many men,
And made him friends of mountains: with the stars
And the quick Spirit of the Universe
He held his dialogues; and they did teach
To him the magic of their mysteries;
To him the book of Night was open'd wide,
And voices from the deep abyss reveal'd
A marvel and a secret — Be it so.

IX.

My dream was past; it had no further change.
It was of a strange order, that the doom
Of these two creatures should be thus traced out
Almost like a reality — the one
To end in madness — both in misery.

PROMETHEUS.

I.

Titian! to whose immortal eyes
The sufferings of mortality,
Seen in their sad reality,
Were not as things that gods despise;
What was thy pity's recompense?
A silent suffering, and intense;
The rock, the vulture, and the chain,
All that the proud can feel of pain,
The agony they do not show,
The suffocating sense of woe,

(1) Mithridates of Pontus.

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Which speaks but in its loneliness,
And then is jealous lest the sky
Should have a listener, nor will sigh
Until its voice is echoless.

II.

Titan! to thee the strife was given
Between the suffering and the will,
Which torture where they cannot kill;
And the inexorable Heaven,
And the deaf tyranny of Fate,
The ruling principle of Hate,
Which for its pleasure doth create
The things it may annihilate,
Refused thee even the boon to die:
The wretched gift eternity
Was thine — and thou hast borne it well.
All that the Thunderer wrung from thee,
Was but the menace which flung back
On him the torments of thy rack;
The fate thou didst so well foresee,
But would not to appease him tell;
And in thy Silence was his Sentence,
And in his Soul a vain repentance,
And evil dread so ill dissembled
That in his hand the lightnings trembled.

III.

Thy Godlike crime was to be kind,
To render with thy precepts less
The sum of human wretchedness,
And strengthen Man with his own mind;
But baffled as thou wert from high,
Still in thy patient energy,
In the endurance, and repulse
Of thine impenetrable Spirit,
Which Earth and Heaven could not convulse,
A mighty lesson we inherit:
Thou art a symbol and a sign
To Mortals of their fate and force;
Like thee, Man is in part, divine,
A troubled stream from a pure source;
And Man in portions can foresee
His own funereal destiny;
His wretchedness, and his resistance,
And his sad unallied existence:

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To which his Spirit may oppose
Itself — and equal to all woes,
  And a firm will, and a deep sense,
Which even in torture can descry
  Its own concenter'd recompense,
Triumphant where it dares defy,
And making Death a Victory.

Diodati, July, 1816.

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ROMANCE MUY DOLOROSO

DEL

SITIO Y TOMA DE ALHAMA.

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THE effect of the original ballad — which existed both in Spanish and Arabic — was such, that it was forbidden to be sung by the Moors, on pain of death, within Granada.

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ROMANCE MUY DOLOROSO

DEL

SITIO Y TOMA DE ALHAMA.

El qual dezia en Aravigo assi:

I.

Passeavase el Rey Moro
Por la ciudad de Granada,
Desde las puertas de Elvira
Hasta las de Bivarambla.
Ay de mi, Alhama!

II.

Cartas le fueron venidas
Que Alhama era ganada.
Las cartas echò en el fuego,
Y al mensagero matava.
Ay de mi, Alhama!

III.

Descavalga de una mula,
Y en un cavallo cavalga.
Por el Zacatin arriba
Subido se avia al Alhambra.
Ay de mi, Alhama!

IV.

Como en el Alhambra estuvo,
Al mismo punto mandava
Que se toquen las trompetas
Con añafiles de plata.
Ay de mi, Alhama!

V.

Y que atambores de guerra
Apriessa toquen alarma;
Por que lo oygan sus Moros,
Los de la Vega y Granada.
Ay de mi, Alhama!

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A VERY MOURNFUL BALLAD

ON THE

SIEGE AND CONQUEST OF ALHAMA.

Which, in the Arabic language, is to the following purport.

I.

The Moorish King rides up and down
Through Granada's royal town;
From Elvira's gates to those
Of Bivarambla on he goes.
Woe is me, Alhama!

II.

Letters to the monarch tell
How Alhama's city fell:
In the fire the scroll he threw,
And the messenger he slew.
Woe is me, Alhama!

III.

He quits his mule, and mounts his horse,
And through the street directs his course;
Through the street of Zacatin
To the Alhambra spurring in.
Woe is me, Alhama!

IV.

When the Alhambra walls he gain'd,
On the moment he ordain'd
That the trumpet straight should sound
With the silver clarion round.
Woe is me, Alhama!

V.

And when the hollow drums of war
Beat the loud alarm afar,
That the Moors of town and plain
Might answer to the martial strain,
Woe is me, Alhama!

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VI.

Los Moros que el son oyeron,
Que al sangriento Marte llama,
Uno a uno, y dos a dos,
Un gran esquadron formavan.
Ay de mi, Alhama!

VII.

Alli hablò un Moro viejo;
Desta manera hablava: —
Para que nos llamas, Rey?
Para que es este llamada?
Ay de mi, Alhama!

VIII.

Aveys de saber, amigos,
Una nueva desdichada:
Que Christianos, con braveza,
Ya nos han tomado Alhama.
Ay de mi, Alhama!

IX.

Alli hablò un viejo Alfaqui,
De barba crecida y cana: —
Bien se te emplea, buen Rey,
Buen Rey; bien se.te empleava.
Ay de mi, Alhama!

X.

Mataste los Bencerrages,
Que era la flor de Granada;
Cogiste los tornadizos
De Cordova la nombrada.
Ay de mi, Alhama!

XI.

Por esso mereces, Rey,
Una pene bien doblada;
Que te pierdas tu y el reyno,
Y que se pierda Granada.
Ay de mi, Alhama!

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VI.

Then the Moors, by this aware
That bloody Mars recall'd them there,
One by one, and two by two,
To a mighty squadron grew.
Woe is me, Alhama!

VII.

Out then spake an aged Moor
In these words the king before,
"Wherefore call on us, oh King?
What may mean this gathering?"
Woe is me, Alhama!

VIII.

"Friends! ye have, alas. to know
Of a most disastrous blow,
That the Christians, stern and bold,
Have obtain'd Alhama's hold."
Woe is me, Alhama!

IX.

Qut then spake old Alfaqui,
With his beard so white to see,
"Good King! thou art justly served,
Good King! this thou hast deserved.
Woe is me, Alhama!

X.

"By thee were slain, in evil hour,
The Abencerrage, Granada's flower;
And strangers were received by thee
Of Cordova the Chivalry.
Woe is me, Alhama!

XI.

"And for this, oh King! is sent
On thee a double chastisement:
Thee and thine, thy crown and realm,
One last wreck shall overwhelm.
Woe is me, Alhama!

Google

XII.

Si no se respetan leyes,
Es ley que todo se pierda;
Y que se pierda Granada,
Y que te pierdas en ella.
Ay de mi, Alhama!

XIII.

Fuego por los ojos vierte,
El Rey que esto oyera.
Y como el otro de leyes
De leyes tambien hablava.
Ay de mi, Alhama!

XIV.

Sabe un Rey que no ay leyes
De darle a Reyes disgusto —
Esso dize el Rey Moro
Relinchando de colera.
Ay de mi, Alhama!

XV.

Moro Alfaqui, Moro Alfaqui,
El de la vellida barba,
El Rey te manda prender,
Por la perdida de Alhama.
Ay de mi, Alhama!

XVI.

Y cortarte la cabeza,
Y ponerla en el Alhambra,
Por que a ti castigo sea,
Y otros tiemblen en miralla.
Ay de mi, Alhama!

XVII.

Cavalleros, hombres buenos,
Dezid de mi parte al Rey,
Al Rey Moro de Granada,
Como no le devo nada.
Ay de mi, Alhama!

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XII.

" He who holds no laws in awe,
He must perish by the law;
And Granada must be won,
And thyself with her undone."
Woe is me, Alhama!

XIII.

Fire flash'd from out the old Moor's eyes,
The Monarch's wrath began to rise,
Because he answer'd, and because
He spake exceeding well of laws.
Woe is me, Alhama!

XIV.

" There is no laws to say such things
As may disgust the ear of kings: "—
Thus, snorting with his choler, said
The Moorish King, and doom'd him dead.
Woe is me, Alhama!

XV.

Moor Alfaqui! Moor Alfaqui!
Though thy beard so hoary be,
The King hath sent to have thee seized,
For Alhama's loss displeased.
Woe is me, Alhama!

XVI.

And to fix thy head upon
High Alhambra's loftiest stone;
That this for thee should be the law,
And others tremble when they saw.
Woe is me, Alhama!

XVII.

" Cavalier, and man of worth!
Let these words of mine go forth;
Let the Moorish Monarch know,
That to him I nothing owe;
Woe is me, Alhama!

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XVIII.

De averse Alhama perdido
A mi me pesa en el alma.
Que si el Rey perdiò su tierra,
Otro mucho mas perdiera.
Ay de mi, Alhama!

XIX.

Perdieran hijos padres,
Y casados las casadas:
Las cosas que mas amara
Perdiò l' un y el otro fama.
Ay de mi, Alhama!

XX.

Perdi una hija donzella
Que era la flor d' esta tierra,
Cien doblas dava por ella,
No me las estimo en nada.
Ay de mi, Alhama!

XXI.

Diziendo assi al hacen Alfaqui,
Le cortaron la cabeça,
Y la elevan al Alhambra,
Assi come el Rey lo manda.
Ay de mi, Alhama!

XXII.

Hombres, niños y mugeres,
Lloran tan grande perdida.
Lloravan todas las damas
Quantas en Granada avia.
Ay de mi, Alhama!

XXIII.

Por las calles y ventanas
Mucho luto parecia;
Llora el Rey como fembra,
Qu' es mucho lo que perdia.
Ay de mi, Alhama!

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XVIII.

" But on my soul Alhama weighs,
And on my inmost spirit preys ;
And if the King his land hath lost,
Yet others may have lost the most.
Woe is me, Alhama

XIX.

" Sires have lost their children, wives
Their lords, and valiant men their lives ;
One what best his love might claim
Hath lost, another wealth, or fame.
Woe is me, Alhama !

XX.

' I lost a damsel in that hour,
Of all the land the loveliest flower ;
Doubloons a hundred I would pay,
And think her ransom cheap that day."
Woe is me, Alhama !

XXI.

And as these things the old Moor said,
They sever'd from the trunk his head ;
And to the Alhambra's wall with speed
'T was carried, as the King decreed.
Woe is me, Alhama !

XXII.

And men and infants therein weep
Their loss, so heavy and so deep ;
Granada's ladies, all she rears
Within her walls, burst into tears.
Woe is me, Alhama !

XXIII.

And from the windows o'er the walls
The sable web of mourning falls ;
The King weeps as a woman o'er
His loss, for it is much and sore.
Woe is me, Alhama !

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SONETTO DI VITTORELLI.

PER MONACA.

Sonetto composto in nome di un genitore, a cui era morta poco innanzi una figlia appena maritata; è diretto al genitore della sacra sposa.

Di due vaghe donzelle, oneste, accorte
Lieti e miseri padri il ciel ne feo,
Il ciel, che degne di più nobil sorte
L' una e l' altra veggendo, ambo chiedeo.
La mia fu tolta da veloce morte
A le fumanti tede d' imeneo:
La tua, Francesco, in sugellate porte
Eterna prigioniera or si rendeo.
Ma tu almeno potrai de la gelosa
Irremeabil soglia, ove s' asconde,
La sua tenera udir voce pietosa.
Io verso un fiume d' amarissim' onde,
Corro a quel marmo, in cui la figlia or posa,
Batto, e ribatto, ma nessun risponde.

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TRANSLATION FROM VITTORELLI.

ON A NUN.

Sonnet composed in the name of a father, whose daughter had recently died shortly after her marriage; and addressed to the father of her who had lately taken the veil.

Of two fair virgins, modest, though admired,
Heaven made us happy; and now, wretched sires,
Heaven for a nobler doom their worth desires,
And gazing upon *either*, *both* required.
Mine, while the torch of Hymen newly fired
Becomes extinguish'd, soon — too soon — expires;
But thine, within the closing grate retired,
Eternal captive, to her God aspires.
But *thou* at least from out the jealous door,
Which shuts between your never-meeting eyes,
May'st hear her sweet and pious voice once more:
I to the marble, where *my daughter* lies,
Rush, — the swoln flood of bitterness I pour,
And knock, and knock, and knock — but none replies.

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ODE ON VENICE

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ODE ON VENICE.

I.

Oh Venice! Venice! when thy marble walls
Are level with the waters, there shall be
A cry of nations o'er thy sunken halls,
A loud lament along the sweeping sea!
If I, a northern wanderer, weep for thee,
What should thy sons do? — any thing but weep:
And yet they only murmur in their sleep.
In contrast with their fathers — as the slime,
The dull green ooze of the receding deep,
Is with the dashing of the spring-tide foam
That drives the sailor shipless to his home.
Are they to those that were; and thus they creep,
Crouching and crab-like, through their sapping streets.
Oh! agony — that centuries should reap
No mellower harvest! Thirteen hundred years,
Of wealth and glory turn'd to dust and tears;
And every monument the stranger meets,
Church, palace, pillar, as a mourner greets;
And even the Lion all subdued appears,
And the harsh sound of the barbarian drum,
With dull and daily dissonance, repeats
The echo of thy tyrant's voice along
The soft waves, once all musical to song,
That heaved beneath the moonlight with the throng
Of gondolas — and to the busy hum
Of cheerful creatures, whose most sinful deeds
Were but the overbeating of the heart,
And flow of too much happiness, which needs
The aid of age to turn its course apart
From the luxuriant and voluptuous flood
Of sweet sensations, battling with the blood.
But these are better than the gloomy errors,
The weeds of nations in their last decay,
When Vice walks forth with her unsoften'd terrors,
And Mirth is madness, and but smiles to slay;
And Hope is nothing but a false delay,

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The sick man's lightning half an hour ere death,
When Faintness, the last mortal birth of Pain,
And apathy of limb, the dull beginning
Of the cold staggering race which Death is winning,
Steals vein by vein and pulse by pulse away;
Yet so relieving the o'er-tortured clay,
To him appears renewal of his breath,
And freedom the mere numbness of his chain; —
And then he talks of life, and how again
He feels his spirits soaring — albeit weak,
And of the fresher air, which he would seek;
And as he whispers knows not that he gasps,
That his thin finger feels not what it clasps,
And so the film comes o'er him — and the dizzy
Chamber swims round and round — and shadows busy,
At which he vainly catches, flit and gleam,
Till the last rattle chokes the strangled scream,
And all is ice and blackness, — and the earth
That which it was the moment ere our birth.

II.

There is no hope for nations! — Search the page
Of many thousand years — the daily scene,
The flow and ebb of each recurring age,
The everlasting *to be* which *hath been*,
Hath taught us nought or little: still we lean
On things that rot beneath our weight, and wear
Our strength away in wrestling with the air;
For 't is our nature strikes us down: the beasts
Slaughter'd in hourly hecatombs for feasts
Are of as high an order — they must go
Even where their driver goads them, though to slaughter
Ye men, who pour your blood for kings as water,
What have they given your children in return?
A heritage of servitude and woes,
A blindfold bondage, where your hire is blows.
What! do not yet the red-hot ploughshares burn,
O'er which you stumble in a false ordeal,
And deem this proof of loyalty the *real;*
Kissing the hand that guides you to your scars,
And glorying as you tread the glowing bars?
All that your sires have left you, all that Time
Bequeaths of free, and History of sublime,
Spring from a different theme! — Ye see and read,
Admire and sigh, and then succumb and bleed!

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Save the few spirits, who, despite of all,
And worse than all, the sudden crimes engender'd
By the down-thundering of the prison-wall,
And thirst to swallow the sweet waters tender'd,
Gushing from Freedom's fountains — when the crowd,
Madden'd with centuries of draught, are loud,
And trample on each other to obtain
The cup which brings oblivion of a chain
Heavy and sore, — in which long yoked they plough'd
The sand, — or if there sprung the yellow grain,
'T was not for them, their necks were too much bow'd,
And their dead palates chew'd the cud of pain: —
Yes! the few spirits — who, despite of deeds
Which they abhor, confound not with the cause
Those momentary starts from Nature's laws,
Which, like the pestilence and earthquake, smite
But for a term, then pass, and leave the earth
With all her seasons to repair the blight
With a few summers, and again put forth
Cities and generations — fair, when free —
For, Tyranny, there blooms no bud for thee!

III.

Glory and Empire! once upon these towers
With Freedom — godlike Triad! how ye sate!
The league of mightiest nations, in those hours
When Venice was an envy, might abate,
But did not quench, her spirit — in her fate
All were enwrapp'd: the feasted monarchs knew
And loved their hostess, nor could learn to hate,
Although they humbled — with the kingly few
The many felt, for from all days and climes
She was the voyager's worship; — even her crimes
Were of the softer order — born of Love,
She drank no blood, nor fatten'd on the dead,
But gladden'd where her harmless conquests spread;
For these restored the Cross, that from above
Hallow'd her sheltering banners, which incessant
Flew between earth and the unholy Crescent,
Which, if it waned and dwindled, Earth may thank
The city it has clothed in chains, which clank
Now, creaking in the ears of those who owe
The name of Freedom to her glorious struggles;
Yet she but shares with them a common woe,
And call'd the "kingdom" of a conquering foe, —

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But knows what all — and, most of all, *we* know —
With what set gilded terms a tyrant juggles!

IV.

The name of Commonwealth is past and gone
O'er the three fractions of the groaning globe;
Venice is crush'd, and Holland deigns to own
A sceptre, and endures the purple robe;
If the free Switzer yet bestrides alone
His chainless mountains, 't is but for a time,
For tyranny of late is cunning grown,
And in its own good season tramples down
The sparkles of our ashes. One great clime,
Whose vigorous offspring by dividing ocean
Are kept apart and nursed in the devotion
Of Freedom, which their fathers fought for, and
Bequeath'd — a heritage of heart and hand,
And proud distinction from each other land,
Whose sons must bow them at a monarch's motion,
As if his senseless sceptre were a wand
Full of the magic of exploded science —
Still one great clime, in full and free defiance,
Yet rears her crest, unconquer'd and sublime,
Above the far Atlantic! — She has taught
Her Esau-brethren that the haughty flag,
The floating fence of Albion's feebler crag,
May strike to those whose red right hands have bought
Rights cheaply earn'd with blood.— Still, still, for ever
Better, though each man's life-blood were a river,
That it should flow, and overflow, than creep
Through thousand lazy channels in our veins,
Damm'd like the dull canal with locks and chains,
And moving, as a sick man in his sleep,
Three paces, and then faltering: — better be
Where the extinguish'd Spartans still are free,
In their proud charnel of Thermopylæ,
Than stagnate in our marsh, — or o'er the deep
Fly, and one current to the ocean add,
One spirit to the souls our fathers had,
One freeman more, America, to thee!

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THE

PROPHECY OF DANTE.

"'Tis the sunset of life gives me mystical lore,
And coming events cast their shadows before."

CAMPBELL.

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DEDICATION.

LADY! if for the cold and cloudy clime
  Where I was born, but where I would not die,
  Of the great Poet-Sire of Italy
I dare to build the imitative rhyme,
Harsh Runic copy of the South's sublime,
  THOU art the cause; and howsoever I
  Fall short of his immortal harmony,
Thy gentle heart will pardon me the crime.
Thou, in the pride of Beauty and of Youth,
  Spakest; and for thee to speak and be obey'd
Are one; but only in the sunny South
  Such sounds are utter'd, and such charms display'd,
So sweet a language from so fair a mouth —
  Ah! to what effort would it not persuade?

Ravenna, June 21, 1819.

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PREFACE.

In the course of a visit to the city of Ravenna in the summer of 1819, it was suggested to the author that having composed something on the subject of Tasso's confinement, he should do the same on Dante's exile,— the tomb of the poet forming one of the principal objects of interest in that city, both to the native and to the stranger.

"On this hint I spake," and the result has been the following four cantos, in terza rima, now offered to the reader. If they are understood and approved, it is my purpose to continue the poem in various other cantos to its natural conclusion in the present age. The reader is requested to suppose that Dante addresses him in the interval between the conclusion of the Divina Commedia and his death, and shortly before the latter event, foretelling the fortunes of Italy in general in the ensuing centuries. In adopting this plan I have had in my mind the Cassandra of Lycophron, and the Prophecy of Nereus by Horace, as well as the Prophecies of Holy Writ. The measure adopted is the terza rima of Dante, which I am not aware to have seen hitherto tried in our language, except it may be by Mr. Hayley, of whose translation I never saw but one extract, quoted in the notes to Caliph Vathek; so that — if I do not err — this poem may be considered as a metrical experiment. The cantos are short, and about the same length of those of the poet, whose name I have borrowed, and most probably taken in vain.

Amongst the inconveniences of authors in the present day, it is difficult for any who have a name, good or bad, to escape translation. I have had the fortune to see the fourth canto of Childe Harold translated into Italian versi sciolti — that is, a poem written in the *Spenserean stanza* into *blank verse*, without regard to the natural divisions of the stanza or of the sense. If the present

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poem, being on a national topic, should chance to undergo the same fate, I would request the Italian reader to remember that when I have failed in the imitation of his great "Padre Alighier," I have failed in imitating that which all study and few understand, since to this very day it is not yet settled what was the meaning of the allegory in the first canto of the Inferno, unless Count Marchetti's ingenious and probable conjecture may be considered as having decided the question.

He may also pardon my failure the more, as I am not quite sure that he would be pleased with my success, since the Italians, with a pardonable nationality, are particularly jealous of all that is left them as a nation — their literature; and in the present bitterness of the classic and romantic war, are but ill disposed to permit a foreigner even to approve or imitate them, without finding some fault with his ultramontane presumption. I can easily enter into all this, knowing what would be thought in England of an Italian imitator of Milton, or if a translation of Monti, or Pindemonte, or Arici, should be held up to the rising generation as a model for their future poetical essays. But I perceive that I am deviating into an address to the Italian reader, when my business is with the English one; and be they few or many, I must take my leave of both.

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THE

PROPHECY OF DANTE.

CANTO THE FIRST.

Once more in man's frail world! which I had left
So long that 't was forgotten; and I feel
The weight of clay again, — too soon bereft
Of the immortal vision which could heal
My earthly sorrows, and to God's own skies
Lift me from that deep gulf without repeal,
Where late my ears rung with the damned cries
Of souls in hopeless bale; and from that place
Of lesser torment, whence men may arise
Pure from the fire to join the angelic race;
Midst whom my own bright Beatricë bless'd (1)
My spirit with her light; and to the base
Of the eternal Triad! first, last, best,
Mysterious, three, sole, infinite, great God!
Soul universal! led the mortal guest,
Unblasted by the glory, though he trod
From star to star to reach the almighty throne.
Oh Beatricë! whose sweet limbs the sod
So long hath press'd, and the cold marble stone,
Thou sole pure seraph of my earliest love
Love so ineffable, and so alone,
That nought on earth could more my bosom move,
And meeting thee in heaven was but to meet
That without which my soul, like the arkless dove,
Had wander'd still in search of, nor her feet
Relieved her wing till found; without thy light
My paradise had still been incomplete. (2)
Since my tenth sun gave summer to my sight

(1) The reader is requested to adopt the Italian pronunciation of Beatrice, sounding all the syllables.

(2) "Che sol per le belle opre
Che fanno in Cielo il sole e l' altre stelle
Dentro di lui' *si crede il Paradiso*,
Così se guardi fiso
Pensar ben dèi ch' ogni terren' piacere."
Canzone, in which Dante describes the person of Beatrice, Strophe third.

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Thou wert my life, the essence of my thought,
Loved ere I knew the name of love, and bright
Still in these dim old eyes, now overwrought
With the world's war, and years, and banishment,
And tears for thee, by other woes untaught;
For mine is not a nature to be bent
By tyrannous faction, and the brawling crowd,
And though the long, long conflict hath been spent
In vain, and never more, save when the cloud
Which overhangs the Apennine, my mind's eye
Pierces to fancy Florence, once so proud
Of me, can I return, though but to die,
Unto my native soil, they have not yet
Quench'd the old exile's spirit, stern and high.
But the sun, though not overcast, must set,
And the night cometh; I am old in days,
And deeds, and contemplation, and have met
Destruction face to face in all his ways.
The world hath left me, what it found me, pure,
And if I have not gather'd yet its praise,
I sought it not by any baser lure;
Man wrongs, and Time avenges, and my name
May form a monument not all obscure,
Though such was not my ambition's end or aim,
To add to the vain-glorious list of those
Who dabble in the pettiness of fame,
And make men's fickle breath the wind that blows
Their sail, and deem it glory to be class'd
With conquerors, and virtue's other foes,
In bloody chronicles of ages past.
I would have had my Florence great and free: (1)
Oh Florence! Florence! unto me thou wast
Like that Jerusalem which the Almighty He
Wept over, "but thou wouldst not;" as the bird
Gathers its young, I would have gather'd thee
Beneath a parent pinion, hadst thou heard
My voice; but as the adder, deaf and fierce,
Against the breast that cherish'd thee was stirr'd
Thy venom, and my state thou didst amerce,
And doom this body forfeit to the fire.

(1) "L'Esilio che m' è dato onor mi tegno.
* * * * *
Cader tra' bouni è pur di lode degno."

Sonnet of Dante,

in which he represents Right, Generosity, and Temperance as banished from among men, and seeking refuge from Love, who inhabits his bosom.

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Alas! how bitter is his country's curse
To him who *for* that country would expire,
But did not merit to expire *by* her,
And loves her, loves her even in her ire.
The day may come when she will cease to err,
The day may come she would be proud to have
The dust she dooms to scatter, and transfer (1)
Of him, whom she denied a home, the grave.
But this shall not be granted; let my dust
Lie where it falls; nor shall the soil which gave
Me breath, but in her sudden fury thrust
Me forth to breathe elsewhere, so reassume
My indignant bones, because her angry gust
Forsooth is over, and repeal'd her doom;
No, — she denied me what was mine — my roof,
And shall not have what is not hers — my tomb.
Too long her armed wrath hath kept aloof
The breast which would have bled for her, the heart
That beat, the mind that was temptation proof,
The man who fought, toil'd, travell'd, and each part
Of a true citizen fulfill'd, and saw
For his reward the Guelf's ascendant art
Pass his destruction even into a law.
These things are not made for forgetfulness,
Florence shall be forgotten first; too raw
The wound, too deep the wrong, and the distress
Of such endurance too prolong'd to make
My pardon greater, her injustice less,
Though late repented; yet — yet for her sake
I feel some fonder yearnings, and for thine,
My own Beatricē, I would hardly take
Vengeance upon the land which once was mine,
And still is hallow'd by thy dust's return,
Which would protect the murderess like a shrine,
And save ten thousand foes by thy sole urn.
Though, like old Marius from Minturnæ's marsh
And Carthage ruins, my lone breast may burn
At times with evil feelings hot and harsh,
And sometimes the last pangs of a vile foe
Writhe in a dream before me, and o'erarch
My brow with hopes of triumph, — let them go!
Such are the last infirmities of those

(1) "Ut si quis predictorum ullo tempore in fortiam dicti communis pervenerit, *talis perveniens igne comburatur, sic quod moriatur.*"
Second sentence of Florence against Dante, and the fourteen accused with him.— The Latin is worthy of the sentence.

Who long have suffer'd more than mortal woe,
And yet being mortal still, have no repose
But on the pillow of Revenge — Revenge,
Who sleeps to dream of blood, and waking glows
With the oft-baffled, slakeless thirst of change,
When we shall mount again, and they that trod
Be trampled on, while Death and Até range
O'er humbled heads and sever'd necks — Great God!
Take these thoughts from me — to thy hands I yield
My many wrongs, and thine almighty rod
Will fall on those who smote me, — be my shield!
As thou hast been in peril, and in pain,
In turbulent cities, and the tented field —
In toil, and many troubles borne in vain
For Florence. — I appeal from her to Thee!
Thee, whom I late saw in thy loftiest reign,
Even in that glorious vision, which to see
And live was never granted until now,
And yet thou hast permitted this to me.
Alas! with what a weight upon my brow
The sense of earth and earthly things come back,
Corrosive passions, feelings dull and low,
The heart's quick throb upon the mental rack,
Long day, and dreary night; the retrospect
Of half a century bloody and black,
And the frail few years I may yet expect
Hoary and hopeless, but less hard to bear,
For I have been too long and deeply wreck'd
On the lone rock of desolate Despair
To lift my eyes more to the passing sail
Which shuns that reef so horrible and bare;
Nor raise my voice — for who would heed my wail?
I am not of this people, nor this age,
And yet my harpings will unfold a tale
Which shall preserve these times when not a page
Of their perturbed annals could attract
An eye to gaze upon their civil rage,
Did not my verse embalm full many an act
Worthless as they who wrought it; 't is the doom
Of spirits of my order to be rack'd
In life, to wear their hearts out, and consume
Their days in endless strife, and die alone;
Then future thousands crowd around their tomb,
And pilgrims come from climes where they have known
The name of him — who now is but a name,
And wasting homage o'er the sullen stone,

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Spread his — by him unheard, unheeded — fame;
And mine at least hath cost me dear: to die
Is nothing; but to wither thus — to tame
My mind down from its own infinity —
To live in narrow ways with little men,
A common sight to every common eye,
A wanderer, while even wolves can find a den,
Ripp'd from all kindred, from all home, all things
That make communion sweet, and soften pain —
To feel me in the solitude of kings
Without the power that makes them bear a crown —
To envy every dove his nest and wings
Which waft him where the Apennine looks down
On Arno, till he perches, it may be,
Within my all inexorable town,
Where yet my boys are, and that fatal she, (1)
Their mother, the cold partner who hath brought
Destruction for a dowry — this to see
And feel, and know without repair, hath taught
A bitter lesson; but it leaves me free:
I have not vilely found, nor basely sought,
They made an Exile — not a slave of me.

(1) This lady, whose name was *Gemma*, sprung from one of the most powerful Guelf families, named Donati. Corso Donati was the principal adversary of the Ghibellines. She is described as being "*Admodum morosa, ut de Xantippe Socratis philosophi conjuge scriptum esse legimus*," according to Giannozzo Manetti. But Lionardo Aretino is scandalised with Boccace, in his life of Dante, for saying that literary men should not marry. "Qui il Boccaccio non ha pazienza, e dice, le mogli esser contrarie agli studj; e non si ricorda che Socrate il più nobile filosofo che mai fosse, ebbe moglie e figliuoli e uffici della Repubblica nella sua Città; e Aristotele che, &c. &c. ebbe due mogli in varj tempi, ed ebbe figliuoli, e ricchezze assai. — E Marco Tullio — e Catone — e Varrone — e Seneca — ebbero moglie," &c. &c. It is odd that honest Lionardo's examples, with the exception of Seneca, and, for any thing I know, of Aristotle, are not the most felicitous. Tully's Terrentia, and Socrates' Xantippe, by no means contributed to their husbands' happiness, whatever they might do to their philosophy — Cato gave away his wife — of Varro's we know nothing — and of Seneca's, only that she was disposed to die with him, but recovered, and lived several years afterwards. But, says Lionardo, "L'uomo è *animale civile*, secondo piace a tutti i filosofi." And thence concludes that the greatest proof of the *animal's civism* is "la prima congiunzione, dalla quale multiplicata nasce la Città."

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THE

PROPHECY OF DANTE.

CANTO THE SECOND.

THE Spirit of the fervent days of Old,
When words were things that came to pass, and thought
Flash'd o'er the future, bidding men behold
Their children's children's doom already brought
Forth from the abyss of time which is to be,
The chaos of events, where lie half-wrought
Shapes that must undergo mortality;
What the great Seers of Israel wore within,
That spirit was on them, and is on me,
And if, Cassandra-like, amidst the din
Of conflict none will hear, or hearing heed
This voice from out the Wilderness, the sin
Be theirs, and my own feelings be my meed,
The only guerdon I have ever known.
Hast thou not bled? and hast thou still to bleed,
Italia? Ah! to me such things, foreshown
With dim sepulchral light, bid me forget
In thine irreparable wrongs my own;
We can have but one country, and even yet
Thou 'rt mine — my bones shall be within thy breast,
My soul within thy language, which once set
With our old Roman sway in the wide West;
But I will make another tongue arise
As lofty and more sweet, in which express'd
The hero's ardour, or the lover's sighs,
Shall find alike such sounds for every theme
That every word, as brilliant as thy skies,
Shall realise a poet's proudest dream,
And make thee Europe's nightingale of song;
So that all present speech to thine shall seem
The note of meaner birds, and every tongue

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Confess its barbarism, when compared with thine.
This shalt thou owe to him thou didst so wrong,
Thy Tuscan Bard, the banish'd Ghibelline.
Woe! woe! the veil of coming centuries
Is rent, — a thousand years which yet supine
Lie like the ocean waves ere winds arise,
Heaving in dark and sullen undulation,
Float from eternity into these eyes;
The storms yet sleep, the clouds still keep their station,
The unborn earthquake yet is in the womb,
The bloody chaos yet expects creation,
But all things are disposing for thy doom;
The elements await but for the word,
"Let there be darkness!" and thou grow'st a tomb!
Yes! thou, so beautiful, shalt feel the sword,
Thou, Italy! so fair that Paradise,
Revived in thee, blooms forth to man restored:
Ah! must the sons of Adam lose it twice?
Thou, Italy! whose ever golden fields,
Plough'd by the sunbeams solely, would suffice
For the world's granary; thou, whose sky heaven gilds
With brighter stars, and robes with deeper blue;
Thou, in whose pleasant places Summer builds
Her palace, in whose cradle Empire grew,
And form'd the Eternal City's ornaments
From spoils of kings whom freemen overthrew;
Birthplace of heroes, sanctuary of saints,
Where earthly first, then heavenly glory made
Her home; thou, all which fondest fancy paints,
And finds her prior vision but portray'd
In feeble colours, when the eye — from the Alp
Of horrid snow, and rock, and shaggy shade
Of desert-loving pine, whose emerald scalp
Nods to the storm — dilates and dotes o'er thee,
And wistfully implores, as 't were, for help
To see thy sunny fields, my Italy,
Nearer and nearer yet, and dearer still
The more approach'd, and dearest were they free,
Thou — Thou must wither to each tyrant's will:
The Goth hath been, — the German, Frank, and Hun
Are yet to come, — and on the imperial hill
Ruin, already proud of the deeds done
By the old barbarians, there awaits the new,
Throned on the Palatine, while lost and won
Rome at her feet lies bleeding; and the hue
Of human sacrifice and Roman slaughter

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Troubles the clotted air, of late so blue,
And deepens into red the saffron water
Of Tiber, thick with dead; the helpless priest,
And still more helpless nor less holy daughter,
Vow'd to their God, have shrieking fled, and ceased
Their ministry: the nations take their prey,
Iberian, Almain, Lombard, and the beast
And bird, wolf, vulture, more humane than they
Are; these but gorge the flesh and lap the gore
Of the departed, and then go their way;
But those, the human savages, explore
All paths of torture, and insatiate yet,
With Ugolino hunger prowl for more.
Nine moons shall rise o'er scenes like this and set; (1)
The chiefless army of the dead, which late
Beneath the traitor Prince's banner met,
Hath left its leader's ashes at the gate;
Had but the royal Rebel lived, perchance
Thou hadst been spared, but his involved thy fate.
Oh! Rome, the spoiler or the spoil of France,
From Brennus to the Bourbon, never, never
Shall foreign standard to thy walls advance
But Tiber shall become a mournful river.
Oh! when the strangers pass the Alps and Po,
Crush them, ye rocks! floods whelm them, and for ever!
Why sleep the idle avalanches so,
To topple on the lonely pilgrim's head?
Why doth Eridanus but overflow
The peasant's harvest from his turbid bed?
Were not each barbarous horde a nobler prey?
Over Cambyses' host the desert spread
Her sandy ocean, and the sea waves' sway
Roll'd over Pharaoh and his thousands, — why,
Mountains and waters, do ye not as they?
And you, ye men! Romans, who dare not die,
Sons of the conquerors who overthrew
Those who overthrew proud Xerxes, where yet lie
The dead whose tomb Oblivion never knew,
Are the Alps weaker than Thermopylæ?
Their passes more alluring to the view
Of an invader? is it they, or ye,
That to each host the mountain-gate unbar,

(1) See "Sacco di Roma," generally attributed to Guicciardini. There is another written by a Jacopo *Buonaparte*, Gentiluomo Samminiatese, che vi si trovò presente.

And leave the march in peace, the passage free?
Why, Nature's self detains the victor's car,
And makes your land impregnable, if earth
Could be so; but alone she will not war,
Yet aids the warrior worthy of his birth
In a soil where the mothers bring forth men:
Not so with those whose souls are little worth;
For them no fortress can avail, — the den
Of the poor reptile which preserves its sting
Is more secure than walls of adamant, when
The hearts of those within are quivering.
Are ye not brave? Yes, yet the Ausonian soil
Hath hearts, and hands, and arms, and hosts to bring
Against Oppression; but how vain the toil,
While still Division sows the seeds of woe
And weakness, till the stranger reaps the spoil.
Oh! my own beauteous land! so long laid low,
So long the grave of thy own children's hopes,
When there is but required a single blow
To break the chain, yet — yet the Avenger stops,
And Doubt and Discord step 'twixt thine and thee,
And join their strength to that which with thee copes;
What is there wanting then to set thee free
And show thy beauty in its fullest light?
To make the Alps impassable; and we,
Her sons, may do this with *one* deed —— Unite.

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THE

PROPHECY OF DANTE.

CANTO THE THIRD.

From out the mass of never-dying ill,
The Plague, the Prince, the Stranger, and the Sword
Vials of wrath but emptied to refill
And flow again, I cannot all record
That crowds on my prophetic eye: the earth
And ocean written o'er would not afford
Space for the annal, yet it shall go forth;
Yes, all, though not by human pen, is graven,
There where the farthest suns and stars have birth,
Spread like a banner at the gate of heaven,
The bloody scroll of our millennial wrongs
Waves, and the echo of our groans is driven
Athwart the sound of archangelic songs,
And Italy, the martyr'd nation's gore,
Will not in vain arise to where belongs
Omnipotence and mercy evermore:
Like to a harpstring stricken by the wind,
The sound of her lament shall, rising o'er
The seraph voices, touch the Almighty Mind.
Meantime I, humblest of thy sons, and of
Earth's dust by immortality refined
To sense and suffering, though the vain may scoff,
And tyrants threat, and meeker victims bow
Before the storm because its breath is rough,
To thee, my country! whom before, as now,
I loved and love, devote the mournful lyre
And melancholy gift high powers allow
To read the future; and if now my fire
Is not as once it shone o'er thee, forgive!
I but foretell thy fortunes — then expire;
Think not that I would look on them and live.

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A spirit forces me to see and speak,
And for my guerdon grants *not* to survive;
My heart shall be pour'd over thee and break:
Yet for a moment, ere I must resume
Thy sable web of sorrow, let me take
Over the gleams that flash athwart thy gloom
A softer glimpse; some stars shine through thy night,
And many meteors, and above thy tomb
Leans sculptured Beauty, which Death cannot blight;
And from thine ashes boundless spirits rise
To give thee honour, and the earth delight;
Thy soil shall still be pregnant with the wise,
The gay, the learn'd, the generous, and the brave,
Native to thee as summer to thy skies,
Conquerors on foreign shores, and the far wave, (1)
Discoverers of new worlds, which take their name; (2)
For *thee* alone they have no arm to save,
And all thy recompense is in their fame,
A noble one to them, but not to thee —
Shall they be glorious, and thou still the same?
Oh! more than these illustrious far shall be
The being — and even yet he may be born —
The mortal saviour who shall set thee free,
And see thy diadem so changed and worn
By fresh barbarians, on thy brow replaced;
And the sweet sun replenishing thy morn,
Thy moral morn, too long with clouds defaced
And noxious vapours from Avernus risen,
Such as all they must breathe who are debased
By servitude, and have the mind in prison.
Yet through this centuried eclipse of woe
Some voices shall be heard, and earth shall listen;
Poets shall follow in the path I show,
And make it broader; the same brilliant sky
Which cheers the birds to song shall bid them glow,
And raise their notes as natural and high;
Tuneful shall be their numbers; they shall sing
Many of love, and some of liberty,
But few shall soar upon that eagle's wing,
And look in the sun's face with eagle's gaze
All free and fearless as the feather'd king,
But fly more near the earth; how many a phrase

(1) Alexander of Parma, Spinola, Pescara, Eugene of Savoy, Montecuccoli.

(2) Columbus Americus Vespasius, Sebastian Cabot.

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Sublime shall lavish'd be on some small prince
In all the prodigality of praise
And language, eloquently false, evince
The harlotry of genius, which, like beauty,
Too oft forgets its own self-reverence,
And looks on prostitution as a duty.
He who once enters in a tyrant's hall (1)
As guest is slave, his thoughts become a booty,
And the first day which sees the chain enthral
A captive, sees his half of manhood gone — (2)
The soul's emasculation saddens all
His spirit; thus the Bard too near the throne
Quails from his inspiration, bound to *please*, —
How servile is the task to please alone!
To smooth the verse to suit his sovereign's ease
And royal leisure, nor too much prolong
Aught save his eulogy, and find, and seize,
Or force, or forge fit argument of song!
Thus trammell'd, thus condemn'd to Flattery's trebles,
He toils through all, still trembling to be wrong:
For fear some noble thoughts, like heavenly rebels,
Should rise up in high treason to his brain,
He sings, as the Athenian spoke, with pebbles
In 's mouth, lest truth should stammer through his strain.
But out of the long file of sonneteers
There shall be some who will not sing in vain,
And he, their prince, shall rank among my peers, (3)
And love shall be his torment: but his grief
Shall make an immortality of tears,
And Italy shall hail him as the Chief
Of Poet-lovers, and his higher song
Of Freedom wreathe him with as green a leaf.
But in a farther age shall rise along
The banks of Po two greater still than he;
The world which smiled on him shall do them wrong
Till they are ashes, and repose with me.
The first will make an epoch with his lyre,
And fill the earth with feats of chivalry:
His fancy like a rainbow, and his fire,
Like that of Heaven, immortal, and his thought
Borne onward with a wing that cannot tire:
Pleasure shall, like a butterfly new caught,

(1) A verse from the Greek tragedians, with which Pompey took leave of Cornelia on entering the boat in which he was slain.

(2) The verse and sentiment are taken from Homer.

(3) Petrarch.

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Flutter her lovely pinions o'er his theme,
And Art itself seem into Nature wrought
By the transparency of his bright dream.—
The second, of a tenderer, sadder mood,
Shall pour his soul out o'er Jerusalem;
He, too, shall sing of arms, and Christian blood
Shed where Christ bled for man; and his high harp
Shall, by the willow over Jordan's flood,
Revive a song of Sion, and the sharp
Conflict, and final triumph of the brave
And pious, and the strife of hell to warp
Their hearts from their great purpose, until wave
The red-cross banners where the first red Cross
Was crimson'd from his veins who died to save,
Shall be his sacred argument; the loss
Of years, of favour, freedom, even of fame
Contested for a time, while the smooth gloss
Of courts would slide o'er his forgotten name,
And all captivity a kindness, meant
To shield him from insanity or shame,
Such shall be his meet guerdon! who was sent
To be Christ's Laureate — they reward him well
Florence dooms me but death or banishment,
Ferrara him a pittance and a cell,
Harder to bear and less deserved, for I
Had stung the factions which I strove to quell;
But this meek man, who with a lover's eye
Will look on earth and heaven, and who will deign
To embalm with his celestial flattery
As poor a thing as e'er was spawn'd to reign,
What will *he* do to merit such a doom?
Perhaps he 'll *love*, — and is not love in vain
Torture enough without a living tomb?
Yet it will be so — he and his compeer,
The Bard of Chivalry, will both consume
In penury and pain too many a year,
And, dying in despondency, bequeath
To the kind world, which scarce will yield a tear,
A heritage enriching all who breathe
With the wealth of a genuine poet's soul,
And to their country a redoubled wreath,
Unmatch'd by time; not Hellas can unroll
Through her olympiads two such names, though one
Of hers be mighty; — and is this the whole
Of such men's destiny beneath the sun?
Must all their finer thoughts, the thrilling sense,

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The electric blood with which their arteries run,
Their body's self turn'd soul with the intense
Feeling of that which is, and fancy of
That which should be, to such a recompense
Conduct? shall their bright plumage on the rough
Storm be still scatter'd? Yes, and it must be,
For, form'd of far too penetrable stuff,
These birds of Paradise but long to flee
Back to their native mansion, soon they find
Earth's mist with their pure pinions not agree,
And die or are degraded, for the mind
Succumbs to long infection, and despair,
And vulture passions flying close behind,
Await the moment to assail and tear;
And when at length the winged wanderers stoop,
Then is the prey-birds' triumph, then they share
The spoil, o'erpower'd at length by one fell swoop.
Yet some have been untouch'd who learn'd to bear,
Some whom no power could ever force to droop,
Who could resist themselves even, hardest care!
And task most hopeless; but some such have been,
And if my name amongst the number were,
That destiny austere, and yet serene,
Were prouder than more dazzling fame unbless'd;
The Alp's snow summit nearer heaven is seen
Than the volcano's fierce eruptive crest,
Whose splendour from the black abyss is flung,
While the scorch'd mountain, from whose burning breast
A temporary torturing flame is wrung,
Shines for a night of terror, then repels
Its fire back to the hell from whence it sprung,
The hell which in its entrails ever dwells.

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THE

PROPHECY OF DANTE.

CANTO THE FOURTH.

Many are poets who have never penn'd
Their inspiration, and perchance the best:
They felt, and loved, and died, but would not lend
Their thoughts to meaner beings; they compress'd
The god within them, and rejoin'd the stars
Unlaurell'd upon earth, but far more bless'd
Than those who are degraded by the jars
Of passion, and their frailties link'd to fame,
Conquerors of high renown, but full of scars.
Many are poets but without the name,
For what is poesy but to create
From overfeeling good or ill; and aim
At an external life beyond our fate,
And be the new Prometheus of new men,
Bestowing fire from heaven, and then, too late
Finding the pleasure given repaid with pain,
And vultures to the heart of the bestower,
Who, having lavish'd his high gift in vain,
Lies chain'd to his lone rock by the sea-shore?
So be it: we can bear.— But thus all they
Whose intellect is an o'ermastering power
Which still recoils from its encumbering clay
Or lightens it to spirit, whatsoe'er
The form which their creations may essay,
Are bards; the kindled marble's bust may wear
More poesy upon its speaking brow
Than aught less than the Homeric page may bear;
One noble stroke with a whole life may glow,
Or deify the canvass till it shine
With beauty so surpassing all below
That they who kneel to idols so divine

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Break no commandment, for high heaven is there
Transfused, transfigurated: and the line
Of poesy, which peoples but the air
With thought and beings of our thoughts reflected,
Can do no more: then let the artist share
The palm, he shares the peril, and dejected
Faints o'er the labour unapproved — Alas!
Despair and Genius are too oft connected.
Within the ages which before me pass
Art shall resume and equal even the sway
Which with Apelles and old Phidias
She held in Hellas' unforgotten day.
Ye shall be taught by Ruin to revive
The Grecian forms at least from their decay,
And Roman souls at last again shall live
In Roman works wrought by Italian hands,
And temples, loftier than the old temples, give
New wonders to the world; and while still stands
The austere Pantheon, into heaven shall soar
A dome, (1) its image, while the base expands
Into a fane surpassing all before,
Such as all flesh shall flock to kneel in: ne'er
Such sight hath been unfolded by a door
As this, to which all nations shall repair,
And lay their sins at this huge gate of heaven.
And the bold Architect unto whose care
The daring charge to raise it shall be given,
Whom all arts shall acknowledge as their lord,
Whether into the marble chaos driven
His chisel bid the Hebrew, (2) at whose word
Israel left Egypt, stop the waves in stone,

(1) The cupola of St. Peter's.

(2) The statue of Moses on the monument of Julius II.

SONETTO

Di Giovanni Battista Zappi.

Chi è costui, che in dura pietra scolto,
Siede gigante; e le più illustre, e conte
Opre dell' arte avvanza, e ha vive, e pronte
Le labbra sì, che le parole ascolto?
Quest' è Mosè; ben me 'l diceva il folto
Onor del mento, e 'l doppio raggio in fronte,
Quest' è Mosè, quando scendea del monte,
E gran parte del Nume avea nel volto.
Tal era allor, che le sonanti, e vaste
Acque ei sospese a se d' intorno, e tale
Quando il mar chiuse, e ne fè tomba altrui.
E voi sue turbe un rio vitello alzaste?
Alzata aveste imago a questa eguale!
Ch' era men fallo l' adorar costui.

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Or hues of Hell be by his pencil pour'd
Over the damn'd before the Judgment throne, (1)
Such as I saw them, such as all shall see,
Or fanes be built of grandeur yet unknown,
The stream of his great thoughts shall spring from me, (2)
The Ghibelline, who traversed the three realms
Which form the empire of eternity.
Amidst the clash of swords, and clang of helms,
The age which I anticipate, no less
Shall be the Age of Beauty, and while whelms
Calamity the nations with distress,
The genius of my country shall arise,
A Cedar towering o'er the Wilderness,
Lovely in all its branches to all eyes,
Fragrant as fair, and recognised afar,
Wafting its native incense through the skies.
Sovereigns shall pause amidst their sport of war,
Wean'd for an hour from blood, to turn and gaze
On canvass or on stone ; and they who mar
All beauty upon earth, compell'd to praise,
Shall feel the power of that which they destroy ;
And Art's mistaken gratitude shall raise
To tyrants, who but take her for a toy
Emblems and monuments, and prostitute
Her charms to pontiffs proud, (3) who but employ
The man of genius as the meanest brute
To bear a burthen, and to serve a need,
To sell his labours, and his soul to boot.
Who toils for nations may be poor indeed,
But free ; who sweats for monarchs is no more
Than the gilt chamberlain, who, clothed and fee'd,
Stands sleek and slavish, bowing at his door.
Oh, Power that rulest and inspirest ! how
Is it that they on earth, whose earthly power
Is likest thine in heaven in outward show,
Least like to thee in attributes divine,
Tread on the universal necks that bow,
And then assure us that their rights are thine ?
And how is it that they, the sons of fame,
Whose inspiration seems to them to shine
From high, they whom the nations oftest name,

(1 The Last Judgment, in the Sistine Chapel.

(2, I have read somewhere (if I do not err, for I cannot recollect where,) that Dante was so great a favourite of Michael Angelo's, that he had designed the whole of the Divina Commedia ; but that the volume containing these studies was lost by sea.

(3) See the treatment of Michael Angelo by Julius II., and his neglect by Leo X.

Must pass their days in penury or pain,
Or step to grandeur through the paths of shame,
And wear a deeper brand and gaudier chain?
Or if their destiny be born aloof
From lowliness, or tempted thence in vain,
In their own souls sustain a harder proof,
The inner war of passions deep and fierce?
Florence! when thy harsh sentence razed my roof,
I loved thee; but the vengeance of my verse,
The hate of injuries which every year
Makes greater, and accumulates my curse,
Shall live, outliving all thou holdest dear,
Thy pride, thy wealth, thy freedom, and even *that*,
The most infernal of all evils here,
The sway of petty tyrants in a state;
For such sway is not limited to kings,
And demagogues yield to them but in date
As swept off sooner; in all deadly things
Which make men hate themselves, and one another,
In discord, cowardice, cruelty, all that springs
From Death the Sin-born's incest with his mother,
In rank oppression in its rudest shape,
The faction Chief is but the Sultan's brother
And the worst despot's far less human ape:
Florence! when this lone spirit, which so long
Yearn'd, as the captive toiling at escape,
To fly back to thee in despite of wrong,
An exile, saddest of all prisoners,
Who has the whole world for a dungeon strong,
Seas, mountains, and the horizon's verge for bars,
Which shut him from the sole small spot of earth
Where — whatsoe'er his fate — he still were hers,
His country's, and might die where he had birth —
Florence! when this lone spirit shall return
To kindred spirits, thou wilt feel my worth,
And seek to honour with an empty urn
The ashes thou shalt ne'er obtain — Alas!
"What have I done to thee, my people?" (1) Stern
Are all thy dealings, but in this they pass
The limits of man's common malice, for
All that a citizen could be I was;
Raised by thy will, all thine in peace or war,

(1) "E scrisse più volte non solamente a particolari cittadini del reggimento, ma ancora al popolo, e intra l' altre una Epistola assai lunga che comincia: — '*Populе mi, quid feci tibi?*'"

Vita di Dante scritta da Leonardo Aretino.

And for this thou hast warr'd with me.— 'T is done :
I may not overleap the eternal bar
Built up between us, and will die alone,
Beholding with the dark eye of a seer
The evil days to gifted souls foreshown,
Foretelling them to those who will not hear.
As in the old time, till the hour be come
When Truth shall strike their eyes through many a tear,
And make them own the Prophet in his tomb.

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C A I N,

A MYSTERY.

"Now the Serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made." — *Gen.* ch. iii. ver. 1.

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TO

SIR WALTER SCOTT, BART.

THIS MYSTERY OF CAIN

IS INSCRIBED,

BY HIS OBLIGED FRIEND,

AND FAITHFUL SERVANT,

THE AUTHOR.

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PREFACE.

THE following scenes are entitled "A Mystery," in conformity with the ancient title annexed to dramas upon similar subjects, which were styled "Mysteries, or Moralities." The author has by no means taken the same liberties with his subject which were common formerly, as may be seen by any reader curious enough to refer to those very profane productions, whether in English, French, Italian, or Spanish. The author has endeavoured to preserve the language adapted to his characters; and where it is (and this is but rarely) taken from actual *Scripture*, he has made as little alteration, even of words, as the rhythm would permit. The reader will recollect that the book of Genesis does not state that Eve was tempted by a demon, but by "the Serpent;" and that only because he was "the most subtil of all the beasts of the field." Whatever interpretation the Rabbins and the Fathers may have put upon this, I take the words as I find them, and reply, with Bishop Watson upon similar occasions, when the Fathers were quoted to him, as Moderator in the schools of Cambridge, "Behold the Book!"—holding up the Scripture. It is to be recollected, that my present subject has nothing to do with the *New Testament*, to which no reference can be here made without anachronism. With the poems upon similar topics I have not been recently familiar. Since I was twenty, I have never read Milton; but I had read him so frequently before, that this may make little difference. Gesner's "Death of Abel" I have never read since I was eight years of age, at Aberdeen. The general impression of my recollection is delight; but of the contents I remember only that Cain's wife was called Mahala, and Abel's Thirza: in the following pages I have called them "Adah" and "Zilla," the earliest female names which

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occur in Genesis; they were those of Lamech's wives: those of Cain and Abel are not called by their names. Whether, then, a coincidence of subject may have caused the same in expression, I know nothing, and care as little.

The reader will please to bear in mind (what few choose to recollect), that there is no allusion to a future state in any of the books of Moses, nor indeed in the Old Testament. For a reason for this extraordinary omission he may consult Warburton's "Divine Legation;" whether satisfactory or not, no better has yet been assigned. I have therefore supposed it new to Cain, without, I hope, any perversion of Holy Writ.

With regard to the language of Lucifer, it was difficult for me to make him talk like a clergyman upon the same subjects; but I have done what I could to restrain him within the bounds of spiritual politeness.

If he disclaims having tempted Eve in the shape of the Serpent, it is only because the book of Genesis has not the most distant allusion to any thing of the kind, but merely to the Serpent in his serpentine capacity.

Note.— The reader will perceive that the author has partly adopted in this poem the notion of Cuvier, that the world had been destroyed several times before the creation of man. This speculation, derived from the different strata and the bones of enormous and unknown animals found in them, is not contrary to the Mosaic account, but rather confirms it; as no human bones have yet been discovered in those strata, although those of many known animals are found near the remains of the unknown. The assertion of Lucifer, that the pre-Adamite world was also peopled by rational beings much more intelligent than man, and proportionably powerful to the mammoth, &c. &c. is, of course, a poetical fiction to help him to make out his case.

I ought to add, that there is a "tramelogedia" of Alfieri, called "Abele."— I have never read that, nor any other of the posthumous works of the writer, except his Life.

Ravenna, Sept. 20, 1821.

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DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Men.	ADAM.
	CAIN.
	ABEL.
Spirits.	ANGEL OF THE LORD.
	LUCIFER.
Women.	EVE.
	ADAH.
	ZILLAH.

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CAIN,

A MYSTERY.

—

ACT I.

SCENE I.

The Land without Paradise.— Time, Sunrise.

ADAM, EVE, CAIN, ABEL, ADAH, ZILLAH, *offering a sacrifice.*

Adam. GOD, the Eternal! Infinite! All-wise! —
Who out of darkness on the deep didst make
Light on the waters with a word — all hail!
Jehovah, with returning light, all hail!
Eve. God! who didst name the day, and separate
Morning from night, till then divided never —
Who didst divide the wave from wave, and call
Part of thy work the firmament — all hail!
Abel. God! who didst call the elements into
Earth — ocean — air — and fire, and with the day
And night, and worlds which these illuminate,
Or shadow, madest beings to enjoy them,
And love both them and thee — all hail! all hail!
Adah. God, the Eternal! Parent of all things!
Who didst create these best and beauteous beings,
To be beloved, more than all, save thee —
Let me love thee and them: — All hail! all hail!
Zillah. Oh, God! who loving, making, blessing all,
Yet didst permit the Serpent to creep in,
And drive my father forth from Paradise,
Keep us from further evil: — Hail! all hail!
Adam. Son Cain, my first-born, wherefore art thou
silent?

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Cain. Why should I speak?
Adam. To pray.
Cain. Have ye not pray'd?
Adam. We have, most fervently.
Cain. And loudly: I
Have heard you.
Adam. So will God, I trust.
Abel. Amen!
Adam. But thou, my eldest born, art silent still.
Cain. 'T is better I should be so.
Adam. Wherefore so?
Cain. I have nought to ask.
Adam. Nor aught to thank for?
Cain. No.
Adam. Dost thou not live?
Cain. Must I not die?
Eve. Alas!
The fruit of our forbidden tree begins
To fall.
Adam. And we must gather it again.
Oh, God! why didst thou plant the tree of knowledge?
Cain. And wherefore pluck'd ye not the tree of life?
Ye might have then defied him.
Adam. Oh! my son,
Blaspheme not: these are serpent's words.
Cain. Why not?
The snake spoke *truth*: it *was* the tree of knowledge;
It *was* the tree of life: knowledge is good,
And life is good; and how can both be evil?
Eve. My boy! thou speakest as I spoke, in sin,
Before thy birth: let me not see renew'd
My misery in thine. I have repented.
Let me not see my offspring fall into
The snares beyond the walls of Paradise,
Which e'en in Paradise destroy'd his parents.
Content thee with what *is*. Had we been so,
Thou now hadst been contented.— Oh, my son!
Adam. Our orisons completed, let us hence,
Each to his task of toil — not heavy, though
Needful: the earth is young, and yields us kindly
Her fruits with little labour.
Eve. Cain, my son,
Behold thy father cheerful and resign'd,
And do as he doth. [*Exeunt* ADAM *and* EVE.
Zillah. Wilt thou not, my brother?
Abel. Why wilt thou wear this gloom upon thy brow.

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Which can avail thee nothing, save to rouse
The Eternal anger?
Adah. My beloved Cain,
Wilt thou frown even on me?
Cain. No, Adah! no;
I fain would be alone a little while.
Abel, I 'm sick at heart; but it will pass;
Precede me, brother — I will follow shortly.
And you, too, sisters, tarry not behind;
Your gentleness must not be harshly met:
I 'll follow you anon.
Adah. If not, I will
Return to seek you here.
Abel. The peace of God
Be on your spirit, brother!
[*Exeunt* ABEL, ZILLAH, *and* ADAH.
Cain (*solus*). And this is
Life! — Toil! and wherefore should I toil? — because
My father could not keep his place in Eden.
What had *I* done in this? — I was unborn:
I sought not to be born; nor love the state
To which that birth has brought me. Why did he
Yield to the serpent and the woman? or,
Yielding, why suffer? What was there in this?
The tree was planted, and why not for him?
If not, why place him near it, where it grew,
The fairest in the centre? They have but
One answer to all questions, "'T was *his* will,
And *he* is good." How know I that? Because
He is all-powerful, must all-good, too, follow?
I judge but by the fruits — and they are bitter —
Which I must feed on for a fault not mine.
Whom have we here? — A shape like to the angels,
Yet of a sterner and a sadder aspect
Of spiritual essence: why do I quake?
Why should I fear him more than other spirits,
Whom I see daily wave their fiery swords
Before the gates round which I linger oft,
In twilight's hour, to catch a glimpse of those
Gardens which are my just inheritance,
Ere the night closes o'er the inhibited walls
And the immortal trees which overtop
The cherubim-defended battlements?
If I shrink not from these, the fire-arm'd angels,
Why should I quail from him who now approaches?
Yet he seems mightier far than they, nor less

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Beauteous, and yet not all as beautiful
As he hath been, and might be: sorrow seems
Half of his immortality. And is it
So? and can aught grieve save humanity?
He cometh.

Enter LUCIFER.

Lucifer. Mortal!
Cain. Spirit, who art thou?
Lucifer. Master of spirits.
Cain. And being so, canst thou
Leave them, and walk with dust?
Lucifer. I know the thoughts
Of dust, and feel for it, and with you.
Cain. How!
You know my thoughts?
Lucifer. They are the thoughts of all
Worthy of thought; — 't is your immortal part
Which speaks within you.
Cain. What immortal part?
This has not been reveal'd: the tree of life
Was withheld from us by my father's folly,
While that of knowledge, by my mother's haste,
Was pluck'd too soon; and all the fruit is death!
Lucifer. They have deceived thee; thou shalt live.
Cain. I live,
But live to die: and, living, see nothing
To make death hateful, save an innate clinging,
A loathsome and yet all invincible
Instinct of life, which I abhor, as I
Despise myself, yet cannot overcome —
And so I live. Would I had never lived!
Lucifer. Thou livest, and must live for ever: think not
The earth, which is thine outward cov'ring, is
Existence — it will cease, and thou wilt be
No less than thou art now.
Cain. No *less!* and why
No more?
Lucifer. It may be thou shalt be as we.
Cain. And ye?
Lucifer. Are everlasting.
Cain. Are ye happy?
Lucifer. We are mighty.
Cain. Are ye happy?
Lucifer. No: art thou?
Cain. How should I be so? Look on me!

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Lucifer. Poor clay!
And thou pretendest to be wretched! Thou!
Cain. I am: — and thou, with all thy might, what art thou?
Lucifer. One who aspired to be what made thee, and
Would not have made thee what thou art.
Cain. Ah!
Thou look'st almost a god; and ——
Lucifer. I am none:
And having fail'd to be one, would be nought
Save what I am. He conquer'd; let him reign!
Cain. Who?
Lucifer. Thy sire's Maker, and the earth's.
Cain. And heaven's,
And all that in them is. So I have heard
His seraphs sing; and so my father saith.
Lucifer. They say — what they must sing and say, on pain
Of being that which I am — and thou art —
Of spirits and of men.
Cain. And what is that?
Lucifer. Souls who dare use their immortality —
Souls who dare look the Omnipotent tyrant in
His everlasting face, and tell him that
His evil is not good! If he has made,
As he saith — which I know not, nor believe —
But, if he made us — he cannot unmake:
We are immortal! — nay, he 'd *have* us so,
That he may torture: — let him! He is great —
But, in his greatness, is no happier than
We in our conflict! Goodness would not make
Evil; and what else hath he made? But let him
Sit on his vast and solitary throne,
Creating worlds, to make eternity
Less burthensome to his immense existence
And unparticipated solitude;
Let him crowd orb on orb: he is alone
Indefinite, indissoluble tyrant;
Could he but crush himself, 't were the best boon
He ever granted: but let him reign on,
And multiply himself in misery!
Spirits and Men, at least we sympathise —
And, suffering in concert, make our pangs
Innumerable, more endurable,
By the unbounded sympathy of all —
With all! But *He!* so wretched in his height,

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So restless in his wretchedness, must still
Create, and re-create ———
Cain. Thou speak'st to me of things which long have swum
In visions through my thought: I never could
Reconcile what I saw with what I heard.
My father and my mother talk to me
Of serpents, and of fruits and trees: I see
The gates of what they call their Paradise
Guarded by fiery-sworded cherubim,
Which shut them out, and me: I feel the weight
Of daily toil, and constant thought: I look
Around a world where I seem nothing, with
Thoughts which arise within me, as if they
Could master all things: — but I thought alone
This misery was *mine.* — My father is
Tamed down; my mother has forgot the mind
Which made her thirst for knowledge at the risk
Of an eternal curse; my brother is
A watching shepherd boy, who offers up
The firstlings of the flock to him who bids
The earth yield nothing to us without sweat;
My sister Zillah sings an earlier hymn
Than the birds' matins; and my Adah, my
Own and beloved, she too understands not
The mind which overwhelms me: never till
Now met I aught to sympathise with me.
'T is well — I rather would consort with spirits.
Lucifer. And hadst thou not been fit by thine own soul
For such companionship, I would not now
Have stood before thee as I am: a serpent
Had been enough to charm ye, as before.
Cain. Ah! didst *thou* tempt my mother?
Lucifer. I tempt none,
Save with the truth: was not the tree, the tree
Of knowledge? and was not the tree of life
Still fruitful? Did *I* bid her pluck them not?
Did *I* plant things prohibited within
The reach of beings innocent, and curious
By their own innocence? I would have made ye
Gods; and even He who thrust ye forth, so thrust ye
Because "ye should not eat the fruits of life,
And become gods as we." Were those his words?
Cain. They were, as I have heard from those who heard them,
In thunder.

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Lucifer. Then who was the demon? He
Who would not let ye live, or he who would
Have made ye live for ever in the joy
And power of knowledge?
Cain. Would they had snatch'd both
The fruits, or neither!
Lucifer. One is yours already,
The other may be still.
Cain. How so?
Lucifer. By being
Yourselves, in your resistance. Nothing can
Quench the mind, if the mind will be itself
And centre of surrounding things — 't is made
To sway.
Cain. But didst thou tempt my parents?
Lucifer. I?
Poor clay! what should I tempt them for, or how?
Cain. They say the serpent was a spirit.
Lucifer. Who
Saith that? It is not written so on high:
The proud One will not so far falsify,
Though man's vast fears and little vanity
Would make him cast upon the spiritual nature
His own low failing. The snake *was* the snake —
Nor more; and yet not less than those he tempted,
In nature being earth also — *more* in *wisdom*,
Since he could overcome them, and foreknew
The knowledge fatal to their narrow joys.
Think'st thou I 'd take the shape of things that die?
Cain. But the thing had a demon?
Lucifer. He but woke one
In those he spake to with his forky tongue.
I tell thee that the serpent was no more
Than a mere serpent: ask the cherubim
Who guard the tempting tree. When thousand ages
Have roll'd o'er your dead ashes, and your seed's,
The seed of the then world may thus array
Their earliest fault in fable, and attribute
To me a shape I scorn, as I scorn all
That bows to him, who made things but to bend
Before his sullen, sole eternity;
But we, who see the truth, must speak it. Thy
Fond parents listen'd to a creeping thing,
And fell. For what should spirits tempt them? What
Was there to envy in the narrow bounds
Of Paradise, that spirits who pervade

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Space —— but I speak to thee of what thou know'st not,
With all thy tree of knowledge.
Cain. But thou canst not
Speak aught of knowledge which I would not know,
And do not thirst to know, and bear a mind
To know.
Lucifer. And heart to look on?
Cain. Be it proved.
Lucifer. Darest thou to look on Death?
Cain. He has not yet
Been seen.
Lucifer. But must be undergone.
Cain. My father
Says he is something dreadful, and my mother
Weeps when he 's named; and Abel lifts his eyes
To heaven, and Zillah casts hers to the earth,
And sighs a prayer; and Adah looks on me,
And speaks not.
Lucifer. And thou?
Cain. Thoughts unspeakable
Crowd in my breast to burning, when I hear
Of this almighty Death, who is, it seems,
Inevitable. Could I wrestle with him?
I wrestled with the lion, when a boy,
In play, till he ran roaring from my gripe.
Lucifer. It has no shape; but will absorb all things
That bear the form of earth-born being.
Cain. Ah!
I thought it was a being: who could do
Such evil things to beings save a being?
Lucifer. Ask the Destroyer.
Cain. Who?
Lucifer. The Maker — call him
Which name thou wilt: he makes but to destroy.
Cain. I knew not that, yet thought it, since I heard
Of death: although I know not what it is,
Yet it seems horrible. I have look'd out
In the vast desolate night in search of him;
And when I saw gigantic shadows in
The umbrage of the walls of Eden, chequer'd
By the far-flashing of the cherubs' swords,
I watch'd for what I thought his coming; for
With fear rose longing in my heart to know
What 't was which shook us all — but nothing came.
And then I turn'd my weary eyes from off
Our native and forbidden Paradise,

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Up to the lights above us, in the azure,
Which are so beautiful: shall they, too, die?
Lucifer. Perhaps — but long outlive both thine and thee.
Cain. I 'm glad of that: I would not have them die —
They are so lovely. What is death? I fear
I feel, it is a dreadful thing; but what,
I cannot compass; 't is denounced against us,
Both them who sinn'd and sinn'd not, as an ill —
What ill?
Lucifer. To be resolved into the earth.
Cain. But shall I know it?
Lucifer. As I know not death,
I cannot answer.
Cain. Were I quiet earth
That were no evil: would I ne'er had been
Aught else but dust!
Lucifer. That is a groveling wish,
Less than thy father's, for he wish'd to know.
Cain. But not to live, or wherefore pluck'd he not
The life-tree?
Lucifer. He was hinder'd.
Cain. Deadly error!
Not to snatch first that fruit: — but ere he pluck'd
The knowledge, he was ignorant of death.
Alas! I scarcely now know what it is,
And yet I fear it — fear I know not what!
Lucifer. And I, who know all things, fear nothing: see
What is true knowledge.
Cain. Wilt thou teach me all?
Lucifer. Ay, upon one condition.
Cain. Name it.
Lucifer. That
Thou dost fall down and worship me — thy Lord.
Cain. Thou art not the Lord my father worships.
Lucifer. No.
Cain. His equal?
Lucifer. No; — I have nought in common with him!
Nor would: I would be aught above — beneath —
Aught save a sharer or a servant of
His power. I dwell apart; but I am great: —
Many there are who worship me, and more
Who shall — be thou amongst the first.
Cain. I never
As yet have bow'd unto my father's God,
Although my brother Abel oft implores
That I would join with him in sacrifice: —

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Why should I bow to thee?
Lucifer. Hast thou ne'er bow'd
To him?
Cain. Have I not said it? — need I say it?
Could not thy mighty knowledge teach thee that?
Lucifer. He who bows not to him has bow'd to me!
Cain. But I will bend to neither.
Lucifer. Ne'er the less,
Thou art my worshipper: not worshipping
Him makes thee mine the same.
Cain. And what is that?
Lucifer. Thou 'lt know here — and hereafter.
Cain. Let me but
Be taught the mystery of my being.
Lucifer. Follow
Where I will lead thee.
Cain. But I must retire
To till the earth — for I had promised ——
Lucifer. What?
Cain. To cull some first-fruits.
Lucifer. Why?
Cain. To offer up
With Abel on an altar.
Lucifer. Saidst thou not
Thou ne'er hadst bent to him who made thee?
Cain. Yes —
But Abel's earnest prayer has wrought upon me;
The offering is more his than mine — and Adah ——
Lucifer. Why dost thou hesitate?
Cain. She is my sister,
Born on the same day, of the same womb; and
She wrung from me, with tears, this promise; and
Rather than see her weep, I would, methinks,
Bear all — and worship aught.
Lucifer. Then follow me!
Cain. I will.

Enter ADAH.

Adah. My brother, I have come for thee;
It is our hour of rest and joy — and we
Have less without thee. Thou hast labour'd not
This morn; but I have done thy task: the fruits
Are ripe, and glowing as the light which ripens:
Come away.
Cain. See'st thou not?
Adah. I see an angel;
We have seen many: will he share our hour

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Of rest? — he is welcome.
Cain. But he is not like
The angels we have seen.
Adah. Are there, then, others?
But he is welcome, as they were: they deign'd
To be our guests — will he?
Cain (to Lucifer). Wilt thou?
Lucifer. I ask
Thee to be mine.
Cain. I must away with him.
Adah. And leave us?
Cain. Ay.
Adah. And *me?*
Cain. Beloved Adah!
Adah. Let me go with thee.
Lucifer. No, she must not.
Adah. Who
Art thou that steppest between heart and heart?
Cain. He is a god.
Adah. How know'st thou?
Cain. He speaks like
A god.
Adah. So did the serpent, and it lied.
Lucifer. Thou errest, Adah! — was not the tree that
Of knowledge?
Adah. Ay — to our eternal sorrow. [not:
Lucifer. And yet that grief is knowledge — so he lied
And if he did betray you, 't was with truth;
And truth in its own essence cannot be
But good.
Adah. But all we know of it has gather'd
Evil on ill: expulsion from our home,
And dread, and toil, and sweat, and heaviness;
Remorse of that which was — and hope of that
Which cometh not. Cain! walk not with this spirit.
Bear with what we have borne, and love me — I
Love thee.
Lucifer. More than thy mother, and thy sire?
Adah. I do. Is that a sin, too?
Lucifer. No, not yet;
It one day will be in your children.
Adah. What!
Must not my daughter love her brother Enoch?
Lucifer. Not as thou lovest Cain.
Adah. Oh, my God!
Shall they not love and bring forth things that love

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Out of their love? have they not drawn their milk
Out of this bosom? was not he, their father,
Born of the same sole womb, in the same hour
With me? did we not love each other? and
In multiplying our being multiply
Things which will love each other as we love
Them? — And as I love thee, my Cain! go not
Forth with this spirit; he is not of ours.

Lucifer. The sin I speak of is not of my making,
And cannot be a sin in you — whate'er
It seem in those who will replace ye in
Mortality.

Adah. What is the sin which is not
Sin in itself? Can circumstance make sin
Or virtue? — if it doth, we are the slaves
Of ——

Lucifer. Higher things than ye are slaves: and higher
Than them or ye would be so, did they not
Prefer an independency of torture
To the smooth agonies of adulation,
In hymns and harpings, and self-seeking prayers,
To that which is omnipotent, because
It is omnipotent, and not from love,
But terror and self-hope

Adah. Omnipotence
Must be all goodness.

Lucifer. Was it so in Eden?

Adah. Fiend! tempt me not with beauty; thou art fairer
Than was the serpent, and as false.

Lucifer. As true.
Ask Eve, your mother: bears she not the knowledge
Of good and evil?

Adah. Oh, my mother! thou
Hast pluck'd a fruit more fatal to thine offspring
Than to thyself; thou at the least hast pass'd
Thy youth in Paradise, in innocent
And happy intercourse with happy spirits:
But we, thy children, ignorant of Eden,
Are girt about by demons, who assume
The words of God, and tempt us with our own
Dissatisfied and curious thoughts — as thou
Wert work'd on by the snake, in thy most flush'd
And heedless, harmless wantonness of bliss.
I cannot answer this immortal thing
Which stands before me; I cannot abhor him;
I look upon him with a pleasing fear,

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And yet I fly not from him: in his eye
There is a fastening attraction which
Fixes my fluttering eyes on his; my heart
Beats quick; he awes me, and yet draws me near,
Nearer and nearer: — Cain — Cain — save me from him!

Cain. What dreads my Adah? This is no ill spirit.

Adah. He is not God — nor God's: I have beheld
The cherubs and the seraphs; he looks not
Like them.

Cain. But there are spirits loftier still —
The archangels.

Lucifer. And still loftier than the archangels.

Adah. Ay — but not blessed.

Lucifer. If the blessedness
Consists in slavery — no.

Adah. I have heard it said,
The seraphs *love most* — cherubim *know most* —
And this should be a cherub — since he loves not.

Lucifer. And if the higher knowledge quenches love,
What must *he be* you cannot love when known?
Since the all-knowing cherubim love least,
The seraphs' love can be but ignorance:
That they are not compatible, the doom
Of thy fond parents, for their daring, proves.
Choose betwixt love and knowledge — since there is
No other choice: your sire hath chosen already;
His worship is but fear.

Adah. Oh, Cain! choose love.

Cain. For thee, Adah, I choose not — it was
Born with me — but I love nought else.

Adah. Our parents?

Cain. Did they love us when they snatch'd from the tree
That which hath driven us all from Paradise?

Adah. We were not born then — and if we had been,
Should we not love them and our children, Cain?

Cain. My little Enoch! and his lisping sister!
Could I but deem them happy, I would half
Forget —— but it can never be forgotten
Through thrice a thousand generations! never
Shall men love the remembrance of the man
Who sow'd the seed of evil and mankind
In the same hour! They pluck'd the tree of science
And sin — and, not content with their own sorrow,
Begot *me* — *thee* — and all the few that are,
And all the unnumber'd and innumerable
Multitudes, millions, myriads, which may be,

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To inherit agonies accumulated
By ages! — and *I* must be sire of such things!
Thy beauty and thy love — my love and joy,
The rapturous moment and the placid hour,
All we love in our children and each other,
But lead them and ourselves through many years
Of sin and pain — or few, but still of sorrow,
Intercheck'd with an instant of brief pleasure,
To Death — the unknown! Methinks the tree of knowledge
Hath not fulfill'd its promise: — if they sinn'd,
At least they ought to have known all things that are
Of knowledge — and the mystery of death.
What do they know? — that they are miserable.
What need of snakes and fruits to teach us that?
Adah. I am not wretched, Cain, and if thou
Wert happy ——
Cain. Be thou happy, then, alone —
I will have nought to do with happiness,
Which humbles me and mine.
Adah. Alone I could not,
Nor *would* be happy: but with those around us
I think I could be so, despite of death,
Which, as I know it not, I dread not, though
It seems an awful shadow — if I may
Judge from what I have heard.
Lucifer. And thou couldst not
Alone, thou say'st, be happy?
Adah. Alone! Oh, my God!
Who could be happy and alone, or good?
To me my solitude seems sin; unless
When I think how soon I shall see my brother,
His brother, and our children, and our parents.
Lucifer. Yet thy God is alone; and is he happy,
Lonely, and good?
Adah. He is not so; he hath
The angels and the mortals to make happy,
And thus becomes so in diffusing joy:
What else can joy be, but the spreading joy?
Lucifer. Ask of your sire, the exile fresh from Eden;
Or of his first-born son: ask your own heart;
It is not tranquil
Adah. Alas! no! and you —
Are you of heaven?
Lucifer. If I am not, enquire
The cause of this all-spreading happiness
(Which you proclaim) of the all-great and good

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Maker of life and living things; it is
His secret, and he keeps it. *We* must bear,
And some of us resist, and both in vain,
His seraphs say: but it is worth the trial,
Since better may not be without: there is
A wisdom in the spirit, which directs
To right, as in the dim blue air the eye
Of you, young mortals, lights at once upon
The star which watches, welcoming the morn.
Adah. It is a beautiful star; I love it for
Its beauty.
Lucifer. And why not adore?
Adah. Our father
Adores the Invisible only.
Lucifer. But the symbols
Of the Invisible are the loveliest
Of what is visible; and yon bright star
Is leader of the host of heaven.
Adah. Our father
Saith that he has beheld the God himself
Who made him and our mother.
Lucifer. Hast *thou* seen him?
Adah. Yes — in his works.
Lucifer. But in his being?
Adah. No —
Save in my father, who is God's own image;
Or in his angels, who are like to thee —
And brighter, yet less beautiful and powerful
In seeming: as the silent sunny noon,
All light, they look upon us; but thou seem'st
Like an ethereal night, where long white clouds,
Streak the deep purple, and unnumber'd stars
Spangle the wonderful mysterious vault
With things that look as if they would be suns;
So beautiful, unnumber'd, and endearing,
Not dazzling, and yet drawing us to them,
They fill my eyes with tears, and so dost thou.
Thou seem'st unhappy: do not make us so,
And I will weep for thee.
Lucifer. Alas! those tears!
Could'st thou but know what oceans will be shed —
Adah. By me?
Lucifer. By all.
Adah. What all?
Lucifer. The million millions —
The myriad myriads — the all-peopled earth —

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The unpeopled earth — and the o'er-peopled Hell,
Of which thy bosom is the germ.
Adah. O Cain!
This spirit curseth us.
Cain. Let him say on;
Him will I follow.
Adah. Whither?
Lucifer. To a place
Whence he shall come back to thee in an hour;
But in that hour see things of many days.
Adah. How can that be?
Lucifer. Did not your Maker make
Out of old worlds this new one in few days?
And cannot I, who aided in this work,
Show in an hour what he hath made in many,
Or hath destroy'd in few?
Cain. Lead on.
Adah. Will he,
In sooth, return within an hour?
Lucifer. He shall.
With us acts are exempt from time, and we
Can crowd eternity into an hour,
Or stretch an hour into eternity:
We breathe not by a mortal measurement —
But that 's a mystery. Cain, come on with me.
Adah. Will he return?
Lucifer. Ay, woman! he alone
Of mortals from that place (the first and last
Who shall return, save ONE), shall come back to thee
To make that silent and expectant world
As populous as this: at present there
Are few inhabitants.
Adah. Where dwellest thou?
Lucifer. Throughout all space. Where should I dwell?
Where are
Thy God or Gods — there am I: all things are
Divided with me; life and death — and time —
Eternity — and heaven and earth — and that
Which is not heaven nor earth, but peopled with
Those who once peopled or shall people both —
These are my realms! So that I do divide
His, and possess a kingdom which is not
His. If I were not that which I have said,
Could I stand here? His angels are within
Your vision.
Adah. So they were when the fair serpent

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Spoke with our mother first.
Lucifer. Cain! thou hast heard.
If thou dost long for knowledge, I can satiate
That thirst; nor ask thee to partake of fruits
Which shall deprive thee of a single good
The conqueror has left thee. Follow me.
Cain. Spirit, I have said it.
[*Exeunt* LUCIFER *and* CAIN.
Adah (*follows, exclaiming*). Cain! my brother! Cain!

ACT II.

SCENE I.

The Abyss of Space.

Cain. I tread on air, and sink not; yet I fear
To sink.
Lucifer. Have faith in me, and thou shalt be
Borne on the air, of which I am the prince.
Cain. Can I do so without impiety?
Lucifer. Believe — and sink not! doubt — and perish!
thus
Would run the edict of the other God,
Who names me demon to his angels; they
Echo the sound to miserable things,
Which, knowing nought beyond their shallow senses,
Worship the word which strikes their ear, and deem
Evil or good what is proclaim'd to them
In their abasement. I will have none such:
Worship or worship not, thou shalt behold
The worlds beyond thy little world, nor be
Amerced for doubts beyond thy little life,
With torture of *my* dooming. There will come
An hour, when, toss'd upon some water-drops,
A man shall say to a man, "Believe in me,
And walk the waters;" and the man shall walk
The billows and be safe. *I* will not say,
Believe in *me*, as a conditional creed
To save thee; but fly with me o'er the gulf
Of space an equal flight, and I will show
What thou dar'st not deny, the history
Of past, and present, and of future worlds.

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Cain. Oh, god, or demon, or whate'er thou art,
Is yon our earth?
Lucifer. Dost thou not recognise
The dust which form'd your father?
Cain. Can it be?
Yon small blue circle, swinging in far ether,
With an inferior circlet near it still,
Which looks like that which lit our earthly night?
Is this our Paradise? Where are its walls,
And they who guard them?
Lucifer. Point me out the site
Of Paradise.
Cain. How should I? As we move
Like sunbeams onward, it grows small and smaller,
And as it waxes little, and then less,
Gathers a halo round it, like the light
Which shone the roundest of the stars, when I
Beheld them from the skirts of Paradise:
Methinks they both, as we recede from them,
Appear to join the innumerable stars
Which are around us: and, as we move on,
Increase their myriads.
Lucifer. And if there should be
Worlds greater than thine own, inhabited
By greater things, and they themselves far more
In number than the dust of thy dull earth,
Though multiplied to animated atoms,
All living, and all doom'd to death, and wretched,
What wouldst thou think?
Cain. I should be proud of thought
Which knew such things.
Lucifer. But if that high thought were
Link'd to a servile mass of matter, and,
Knowing such things, aspiring to such things,
And science still beyond them, were chain'd down
To the most gross and petty paltry wants,
All foul and fulsome, and the very best
Of thine enjoyments a sweet degradation,
A most enervating and filthy cheat
To lure thee on to the renewal of
Fresh souls and bodies, all foredoom'd to be
As frail, and few so happy ——
Cain. Spirit! I
Know nought of death, save as a dreadful thing
Of which I have heard my parents speak, as of
A hideous heritage I owe to them

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No less than life; a heritage not happy,
If I may judge, till now. But, spirit! if
It be as thou hast said, (and I within
Feel the prophetic torture of its truth),
Here let me die: for to give birth to those
Who can but suffer many years, and die,
Methinks is merely propagating death,
And multiplying murder.

Lucifer. Thou canst not
All die — there is what must survive.

Cain. The Other
Spake not of this unto my father, when
He shut him forth from Paradise, with death
Written upon his forehead. But at least
Let what is mortal of me perish, that
I may be in the rest as angels are.

Lucifer. *I* am angelic: wouldst thou be as I am?

Cain. I know not what thou art: I see thy power,
And see thou show'st me things beyond *my* power,
Beyond all power of my born faculties,
Although inferior still to my desires
And my conceptions.

Lucifer. What are they which dwell
So humbly in their pride, as to sojourn
With worms in clay?

Cain. And what art thou who dwellest
So haughtily in spirit, and canst range
Nature and immortality — and yet
Seem'st sorrowful?

Lucifer. I seem that which I am;
And therefore do I ask of thee, if thou
Wouldst be immortal?

Cain. Thou hast said, I must be
Immortal in despite of me. I knew not
This until lately — but since it must be,
Let me, or happy or unhappy, learn
To anticipate my immortality.

Lucifer. Thou didst before I came upon thee.

Cain. How?

Lucifer. By suffering.

Cain. And must torture be immortal?

Lucifer. We and thy sons will try. But now, behold!
Is it not glorious?

Cain. Oh, thou beautiful
And unimaginable ether! and
Ye multiplying masses of increased

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And still increasing lights! what are ye? what
Is this blue wilderness of interminable
Air, where ye roll along, as I have seen
The leaves along the limpid streams of Eden?
Is your course measured for ye? Or do ye
Sweep on in your unbounded revelry
Through an aërial universe of endless
Expansion, at which my soul aches to think —
Intoxicated with eternity?
Oh God! Oh Gods! or whatsoe'er ye are!
How beautiful ye are! how beautiful
Your works, or accidents, or whatsoe'er
They may be! Let me die, as atoms die,
(If that they die) or know ye in your might
And knowledge! My thoughts are not in this hour
Unworthy what I see, though my dust is;
Spirit! let me expire, or see them nearer.

Lucifer. Art thou not nearer? look back to thine earth!

Cain. Where is it? I see nothing save a mass
Of most innumerable lights.

Lucifer. Look there!

Cain. I cannot see it.

Lucifer. Yet it sparkles still.

Cain. That! — yonder!

Lucifer. Yea.

Cain. And wilt thou tell me so?
Why, I have seen the fire-flies and fire-worms
Sprinkle the dusky groves and the green banks
In the dim twilight, brighter than yon world
Which bears them.

Lucifer. Thou hast seen both worms and worlds,
Each bright and sparkling — what dost think of them?

Cain. That they are beautiful in their own sphere,
And that the night, which makes both beautiful,
The little shining fire-fly in its flight,
And the immortal star in its great course,
Must both be guided.

Lucifer. But by whom or what?

Cain. Show me.

Lucifer. Dar'st thou behold?

Cain. How know I what
I *dare* behold? As yet, thou hast shown nought
I dare not gaze on further.

Lucifer. On, then, with me.
Wouldst thou behold things mortal or immortal?

Cain. Why, what are things?

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Lucifer. *Both* partly: but what doth
Sit next thy heart?
Cain. The things I see.
Lucifer. But what
Sate nearest it?
Cain. The things I have not seen,
Nor ever shall — the mysteries of death.
Lucifer. What, if I show to thee things which have died,
As I have shown thee much which cannot die?
Cain. Do so.
Lucifer. Away, then! on our mighty wings.
Cain. Oh! how we cleave the blue! The stars fade from us!
The earth! where is my earth? Let me look on it,
For I was made of it.
Lucifer. 'T is now beyond thee,
Less, in the universe, than thou in it;
Yet deem not that thou canst escape it; thou
Shalt soon return to earth, and all its dust;
'T is part of thy eternity, and mine.
Cain. Where dost thou lead me?
Lucifer. To what was before thee
The phantasm of the world; of which thy world
Is but the wreck.
Cain. What! is it not then new?
Lucifer. No more than life is; and that was ere thou
Or *I* were, or the things which seem to us
Greater than either: many things will have
No end; and some, which would pretend to have
Had no beginning, have had one as mean
As thou; and mightier things have been extinct
To make way for much meaner than we can
Surmise; for *moments* only and the *space*
Have been and must be all *unchangeable*.
But changes make not death, except to clay;
But thou art clay — and canst but comprehend
That which was clay, and such thou shalt behold.
Cain. Clay, spirit! What thou wilt, I can survey.
Lucifer. Away, then!
Cain. But the lights fade from me fast,
And some till now grew larger as we approach'd,
And wore the look of worlds.
Lucifer. And such they are.
Cain. And Edens in them?
Lucifer. It may be.
Cain. And men?

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Lucifer. Yea, or things higher.
Cain. Ay? and serpents too?
Lucifer. Wouldst thou have men without them? must no reptiles
Breathe, save the erect ones?
Cain. How the lights recede!
Where fly we?
Lucifer. To the world of phantoms, which
Are beings past, and shadows still to come.
Cain. But it grows dark, and dark — the stars are gone!
Lucifer. And yet thou seest.
Cain. 'T is a fearful light!
No sun, no moon, no lights innumerable.
The very blue of the empurpled night
Fades to a dreary twilight, yet I see
Huge dusky masses; but unlike the worlds
We were approaching, which, begirt with light,
Seem'd full of life even when their atmosphere
Of light gave way, and show'd them taking shapes
Unequal, of deep valleys and vast mountains;
And some emitting sparks, and some displaying
Enormous liquid plains, and some begirt
With luminous belts, and floating moons, which took,
Like them, the features of fair earth: — instead,
All here seems dark and dreadful.
Lucifer. But distinct.
Thou seekest to behold death, and dead things?
Cain. I seek it not; but as I know there are
Such, and that my sire's sin makes him and me,
And all that we inherit, liable
To such, I would behold at once, what I
Must one day see perforce.
Lucifer. Behold!
Cain. 'T is darkness.
Lucifer. And so it shall be ever; but we will
Unfold its gates!
Cain. Enormous vapours roll
Apart — what 's this?
Lucifer. Enter!
Cain. Can I return?
Lucifer. Return! be sure: how else should death be peopled?
Its present realm is thin to what it will be,
Through thee and thine.
Cain. The clouds still open wide
And wider, and make widening circles round us.

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Lucifer. Advance!
Cain. And thou!
Lucifer. Fear not — without me thou
Couldst not have gone beyond thy world. On! on!
[*They disappear through the clouds.*

SCENE II.

Hades.

Enter LUCIFER *and* CAIN.

Cain. How silent and how vast are these dim worlds!
For they seem more than one, and yet more peopled
Than the huge brilliant luminous orbs which swung
So thickly in the upper air, that I
Had deem'd them rather the bright populace
Of some all unimaginable Heaven,
Than things to be inhabited themselves,
But that on drawing near them I beheld
Their swelling into palpable immensity
Of matter, which seem'd made for life to dwell on,
Rather than life itself. But here, all is
So shadowy and so full of twilight, that
It speaks of a day past.
Lucifer. It is the realm
Of death. — Wouldst have it present?
Cain. Till I know
That which it really is, I cannot answer.
But if it be as I have heard my father
Deal out in his long homilies, 't is a thing —
Oh God! I dare not think on 't! Cursed be
He who invented life that leads to death!
Or the dull mass of life, that, being life,
Could not retain, but needs must forfeit it —
Even for the innocent!
Lucifer. Dost thou curse thy father?
Cain. Cursed he not me in giving me my birth?
Cursed he not me before my birth, in daring
To pluck the fruit forbidden?
Lucifer. Thou say'st well:
The curse is mutual 'twixt thy sire and thee —
But for thy sons and brother?

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Cain. Let them share it
With me, their sire and brother! What else is
Bequeath'd to me? I leave them my inheritance.
Oh, ye interminable gloomy realms
Of swimming shadows and enormous shapes,
Some fully shown, some indistinct, and all
Mighty and melancholy — what are ye?
Live ye, or have ye lived?
Lucifer. Somewhat of both.
Cain. Then what is death?
Lucifer. What? Hath not he who made ye
Said 't is another life?
Cain. Till now he hath
Said nothing, save that all shall die.
Lucifer. Perhaps
He one day will unfold that further secret.
Cain. Happy the day!
Lucifer. Yes; happy! when unfolded
Through agonies unspeakable, and clogg'd
With agonies eternal, to innumerable
Yet unborn myriads of unconscious atoms,
All to be animated for this only!
Cain. What are these mighty phantoms which I see
Floating around me? — They wear not the form
Of the intelligences I have seen
Round our regretted and unenter'd Eden,
Nor wear the form of man as I have view'd it
In Adam's and in Abel's, and in mine,
Nor in my sister-bride's, nor in my children's:
And yet they have an aspect, which, though not
Of men nor angels, looks like something, which,
If not the last, rose higher than the first,
Haughty, and high, and beautiful, and full
Of seeming strength, but of inexplicable
Shape; for I never saw such. They bear not
The wing of seraph, nor the face of man,
Nor form of mightiest brute, nor aught that is
Now breathing; mighty yet and beautiful
As the most beautiful and mighty which
Live, and yet so unlike them, that I scarce
Can call them living.
Lucifer. Yet they lived.
Cain. Where?
Lucifer. Where
Thou livest.
Cain. When?

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Lucifer. On what thou callest earth
They did inhabit.
Cain. Adam is the first.
Lucifer. Of thine, I grant thee — but too mean to be
The last of these.
Cain. And what are they?
Lucifer. That which
Thou shalt be.
Cain. But what *were* they?
Lucifer. Living, high,
Intelligent, good, great, and glorious things,
As much superior unto all thy sire,
Adam, could e'er have been in Eden, as
The sixty-thousandth generation shall be,
In its dull damp degeneracy, to
Thee and thy son; — and how weak they are, judge
By thy own flesh.
Cain. Ah me! and did *they* perish?
Lucifer. Yes, from their earth, as thou wilt fade from thine.
Cain. But was *mine* theirs?
Lucifer. It was.
Cain. But not as now.
It is too little and too lowly to
Sustain such creatures.
Lucifer. True, it was more glorious.
Cain. And wherefore did it fall?
Lucifer. Ask him who fells.
Cain. But how?
Lucifer. By a most crushing and inexorable
Destruction and disorder of the elements,
Which struck a world to chaos, as a chaos
Subsiding has struck out a world: such things,
Though rare in time, are frequent in eternity. —
Pass on, and gaze upon the past.
Cain. 'T is awful!
Lucifer. And true. Behold these phantoms! they were once
Material as thou art.
Cain. And must I be
Like them?
Lucifer. Let He who made thee answer that.
I show thee what thy predecessors are,
And what they *were* thou feelest, in degree
Inferior as thy petty feelings and
Thy pettier portion of the immortal part

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Of high intelligence and earthly strength.
What ye in common have with what they had
Is life, and what ye *shall* have — death: the rest
Of your poor attributes is such as suits
Reptiles engender'd out of the subsiding
Slime of a mighty universe, crush'd into
A scarcely-yet shaped planet, peopled with
Things whose enjoyment was to be in blindness —
A Paradise of Ignorance, from which
Knowledge was barr'd as poison. But behold
What these superior beings are or were;
Or, if it irk thee, turn thee back and till
The earth, thy task — I 'll waft thee there in safety.

Cain. No: I 'll stay here.

Lucifer. How long?

Cain. For ever! Since
I must one day return here from the earth,
I rather would remain; I am sick of all
That dust has shown me — let me dwell in shadows.

Lucifer. It cannot be: thou now beholdest as
A vision that which is reality.
To make thyself fit for this dwelling, thou
Must pass through what the things thou see'st have pass'd -
The gates of death.

Cain. By what gate have we enter'd
Even now?

Lucifer. By mine! but, plighted to return,
My spirit buoys thee up to breathe in regions
Where all is breathless save thyself. Gaze on;
But do not think to dwell here till thine hour
Is come.

Cain. And these, too; can they ne'er repass
To earth again?

Lucifer. *Their* earth is gone for ever —
So changed by its convulsion, they would not
Be conscious to a single present spot
Of its new scarcely harden'd surface — 't was —
Oh, what a beautiful world it *was!*

Cain. And is.
It is not with the earth, though I must till it,
I feel at war, but that I may not profit
By what it bears of beautiful, untoiling,
Nor gratify my thousand swelling thoughts
With knowledge, nor allay my thousand fears
Of death and life.

Lucifer. What thy world is, thou see'st,

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But canst not comprehend the shadow of
That which it was.
Cain. And those enormous creatures,
Phantoms inferior in intelligence
(At least so seeming) to the things we have pass'd,
Resembling somewhat the wild habitants
Of the deep woods of earth, the hugest which
Roar nightly in the forest, but ten-fold
In magnitude and terror; taller than
The cherub-guarded walls of Eden, with
Eyes flashing like the fiery swords which fence them,
And tusks projecting like the trees stripp'd of
Their bark and branches—what were they?
Lucifer. That which
The Mammoth is in thy world; — but these lie
By myriads underneath its surface.
Cain. But
None on it?
Lucifer. No: for thy frail race to war
With them would render the curse on it useless —
'T would be destroy'd so early.
Cain. But why *war?*
Lucifer. You have forgotten the denunciation
Which drove your race from Eden — war with all things,
And death to all things, and disease to most things,
And pangs, and bitterness; these were the fruits
Of the forbidden tree.
Cain. But animals —
Did they, too, eat of it, that they must die?
Lucifer. Your Maker told ye, *they* were made for you,
As you for him. — You would not have their doom
Superior to your own? Had Adam not
Fallen, all had stood.
Cain. Alas! the hopeless wretches
They too must share my sire's fate, like his sons;
Like them, too, without having shared the apple;
Like them, too, without the so dear-bought *knowledge!*
It was a lying tree — for we *know* nothing.
At least it *promised knowledge* at the *price*
Of death — but *knowledge* still: but what *knows* man?
Lucifer. It may be death leads to the *highest* knowledge;
And being of all things the sole thing certain,
At least leads to the *surest* science: therefore
The tree was true, though deadly.
Cain. These dim realms!
I see them, but I know them not.

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Lucifer. Because
Thy hour is yet afar, and matter cannot
Comprehend spirit wholly — but 't is something
To know there are such realms.
Cain. We knew already
That there was death.
Lucifer. But not what was beyond it.
Cain. Nor know I now.
Lucifer. Thou knowest that there is
A state, and many states beyond thine own —
And this thou knewest not this morn.
Cain. But all
Seems dim and shadowy.
Lucifer. Be content; it will
Seem clearer to thine immortality.
Cain. And yon immeasurable liquid space
Of glorious azure which floats on beyond us,
Which looks like water, and which I should deem
The river which flows out of Paradise
Past my own dwelling, but that it is bankless
And boundless, and of an ethereal hue —
What is it?
Lucifer. There is still some such on earth,
Although inferior, and thy children shall
Dwell near it — 't is the phantasm of an ocean.
Cain. 'T is like another world; a liquid sun —
And those inordinate creatures sporting o'er
Its shining surface?
Lucifer. Are its habitants,
The past leviathans.
Cain. And yon immense
Serpent, which rears his dripping mane and vasty
Head ten times higher than the haughtiest cedar
Forth from the abyss, looking as he could coil
Himself around the orbs we lately look'd on —
Is he not of the kind which bask'd beneath
The tree in Eden?
Lucifer. Eve, thy mother, best
Can tell what shape of serpent tempted her.
Cain. This seems too terrible. No doubt the other
Had more of beauty.
Lucifer. Hast thou ne'er beheld him?
Cain. Many of the same kind (at least so call'd),
But never that precisely which persuaded
The fatal fruit, nor even of the same aspect.
Lucifer. Your father saw him not?

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Cain. No: 't was my mother
Who tempted him — she tempted by the serpent.
Lucifer. Good man! whene'er thy wife, or thy sons' wives,
Tempt thee or them to aught that's new or strange,
Be sure thou see'st first who had tempted *them.*
Cain. Thy precept comes too late: there is no more
For serpents to tempt woman to.
Lucifer. But there
Are some things still which woman may tempt man to,
And man tempt woman: — let thy sons look to it!
My council is a kind one; for 'tis even
Given chiefly at my own expense: 't is true,
'T will not be follow'd, so there's little lost.
Cain. I understand not this.
Lucifer. The happier thou!
Thy world and thou art still too young! Thou thinkest
Thyself most wicked and unhappy: is it
Not so?
Cain. For crime, I know not; but for pain,
I have felt much.
Lucifer. First-born of the first man!
The present state of sin — and thou art evil,
Of sorrow—and thou sufferest, are both Eden
In all its innocence compared to what
Thou shortly may'st be; and that state again,
In its redoubled wretchedness, a Paradise
To what thy sons' sons' sons, accumulating
In generations like to dust (which they
In fact but add to), shall endure and do.—
Now let us back to earth!
Cain. And wherefore didst thou
Lead me here only to inform me this?
Lucifer. Was not thy quest for knowledge?
Cain. Yes: as being
The road to happiness.
Lucifer. If truth be so,
Thou hast it.
Cain. Then my father's God did well
When he prohibited the fatal tree.
Lucifer. But had done better in not planting it.
But ignorance of evil doth not save
From evil; it must still roll on the same,
A part of all things.
Cain. Not of all things. No:
I 'll not believe it — for I thirst for good.

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Lucifer. And who and what doth not? *Who* covets evil
For its own bitter sake? — *None* — nothing! 'tis
The leaven of all life, and lifelessness.
Cain. Within those glorious orbs which we behold,
Distant and dazzling, and innumerable,
Ere we came down into this phantom realm,
Ill cannot come: they are too beautiful.
Lucifer. Thou hast seen them from afar.
Cain. And what of that?
Distance can but diminish glory — they,
When nearer, must be more ineffable.
Lucifer. Approach the things of earth most beautiful,
And judge their beauty near.
Cain. I have done this —
The loveliest thing I know is loveliest nearest.
Lucifer. Then there must be delusion — What is that,
Which being nearest to thine eyes is still
More beautiful than beauteous things remote?
Cain. My sister Adah. — All the stars of heaven,
The deep blue noon of night, lit by an orb
Which looks a spirit, or a spirit's world —
The hues of twilight — the sun's gorgeous coming —
His setting indescribable, which fills
My eyes with pleasant tears as I behold
Him sink, and feel my heart float softly with him
Along that western paradise of clouds —
The forest shade — the green bough — the bird's voice —
The vesper bird's, which seems to sing of love,
And mingles with the song of cherubim,
As the day closes over Eden's walls; —
All these are nothing, to my eyes and heart,
Like Adah's face: I turn from earth and heaven
To gaze on it.
Lucifer. 'T is frail as fair mortality,
In the first dawn and bloom of young creation
And earliest embraces of earth's parents,
Can make its offspring; still it is delusion.
Cain. You think so, being not her brother.
Lucifer. Mortal!
My brotherhood's with those who have no children.
Cain. Then thou canst have no fellowship with us.
Lucifer. It may be that thine own shall be for me.
But if thou dost possess a beautiful
Being beyond all beauty in thine eyes,
Why art thou wretched?
Cain. Why do I exist?

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Why art *thou* wretched? why are all things so?
Ev'n he who made us must be, as the maker
Of things unhappy! To produce destruction
Can surely never be the task of joy,
And yet my sire says he 's omnipotent:
Then why is evil — he being good? I ask'd
This question of my father; and he said,
Because this evil only was the path
To good. Strange good, that must arise from out
Its deadly opposite. I lately saw
A lamb stung by a reptile: the poor suckling
Lay foaming on the earth, beneath the vain
And piteous bleating of its restless dam;
My father pluck'd some herbs, and laid them to
The wound; and by degrees the helpless wretch
Resumed its careless life, and rose to drain
The mother's milk, who o'er it tremulous
Stood licking its reviving limbs with joy.
Behold, my son! said Adam how from evil
Springs good!

Lucifer. What didst thou answer?

Cain. Nothing; for
He is my father: but I thought, that 't were
A better portion for the animal
Never to have been *stung at all*, than to
Purchase renewal of its little life
With agonies unutterable, though
Dispell'd by antidotes.

Lucifer. But as thou saidst
Of all beloved things thou lovest her
Who shared thy mother's milk, and giveth hers
Unto thy children ——

Cain. Most assuredly:
What should I be without her?

Lucifer. What am I?

Cain. Dost thou love nothing?

Lucifer. What does thy God love?

Cain. All things, my father says; but I confess
I see it not in their allotment here.

Lucifer. And, therefore, thou canst not see if *I* love
Or no, except some vast and general purpose,
To which particular things must melt like snows.

Cain. Snows! what are they?

Lucifer. Be happier in not knowing
What thy remoter offspring must encounter;
But bask beneath the clime which knows no winter!

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Cain. But dost thou not love something like thyself?

Lucifer. And dost thou love *thyself?*

Cain. Yes, but love more
What makes my feelings more endurable,
And is more than myself, because I love it.

Lucifer. Thou lovest it, because 't is beautiful,
As was the apple in thy mother's eye;
And when it ceases to be so, thy love
Will cease, like any other appetite.

Cain. Cease to be beautiful! how can that be?

Lucifer. With time.

Cain. But time has past, and hitherto
Even Adam and my mother both are fair:
Not fair like Adah and the seraphim —
But very fair.

Lucifer. All that must pass away
In them and her.

Cain. I 'm sorry for it; but
Cannot conceive my love for her the less.
And when her beauty disappears, methinks
He who creates all beauty will lose more
Than me in seeing perish such a work.

Lucifer. I pity thee who lovest what must perish.

Cain. And I thee who lov'st nothing.

Lucifer. And thy brother
Sits he not near thy heart?

Cain. Why should he not?

Lucifer. Thy father loves him well — so does thy God.

Cain. And so do I.

Lucifer. 'T is well and meekly done.

Cain. Meekly!

Lucifer. He is the second born of flesh,
And is his mother's favourite.

Cain. Let him keep
Her favour, since the serpent was the first
To win it.

Lucifer. And his father's?

Cain. What is that
To me? should I not love that which all love?

Lucifer. And the Jehovah — the indulgent Lord,
And bounteous planter of barr'd Paradise —
He, too, looks smilingly on Abel.

Cain. I
Ne'er saw him, and I know not if he smiles.

Lucifer. But you have seen his angels.

Cain. Rarely.

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Lucifer. But
Sufficiently to see they love your brother:
His sacrifices are acceptable.
Cain. So be they! wherefore speak to me of this?
Lucifer. Because thou hast thought of this ere now.
Cain. And if
I *have* thought, why recall a thought that —— (*he pauses, as agitated*) — Spirit!
Here we are in *thy* world; speak not of *mine*.
Thou hast shown me wonders; thou hast shown me those
Mighty Pre-Adamites who walk'd the earth
Of which ours is the wreck; thou hast pointed out
Myriads of starry worlds, of which our own
Is the dim and remote companion, in
Infinity of life: thou hast shown me shadows
Of that existence with the dreaded name
Which my sire brought us — Death; thou hast shown me much —
But not all: show me where Jehovah dwells,
In his especial Paradise — or *thine*:
Where is it?
Lucifer. *Here*, and o'er all space.
Cain. But ye
Have some allotted dwelling — as all things;
Clay has its earth, and other worlds their tenants;
All temporary breathing creatures their
Peculiar element; and things which have
Long ceased to breathe *our* breath, have theirs, thou say'st;
And the Jehovah and thyself have thine —
Ye do not dwell together?
Lucifer. No, we reign
Together; but our dwellings are asunder.
Cain. Would there were only one of ye! perchance
An unity of purpose might make union
In elements which seem now jarr'd in storms.
How came ye, being spirits, wise and infinite,
To separate? Are ye not as brethren in
Your essence, and your nature, and your glory?
Lucifer. Art thou not Abel's brother?
Cain. We are brethren,
And so we shall remain; but were it not so,
Is spirit like to flesh? can it fall out?
Infinity with Immortality?
Jarring and turning space to misery —
For what?
Lucifer. To reign.

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Cain. Did ye not tell me that
Ye are both eternal?
Lucifer. Yea!
Cain. And what I have seen,
Yon blue immensity, is boundless?
Lucifer. Ay.
Cain. And cannot ye both *reign* then? — is there not
Enough? — why should ye differ?
Lucifer. We *both* reign.
Cain. But one of you makes evil.
Lucifer. Which?
Cain. Thou! for
If thou canst do man good, why dost thou not?
Lucifer. And why not he who made? *I* made ye not;
Ye are *his* creatures, and not mine.
Cain. Then leave us
His creatures, as thou say'st we are, or show me
Thy dwelling, or *his* dwelling.
Lucifer. I could show thee
Both; but the time will come thou shalt see one
Of them for evermore.
Cain. And why not now?
Lucifer. Thy human mind hath scarcely grasp to gather
The little I have shown thee into calm
And clear thought; and *thou* wouldst go on aspiring
To the great double Mysteries! the *two Principles!*
And gaze upon them on their secret thrones!
Dust! limit thy ambition; for to see
Either of these, would be for thee to perish!
Cain. And let me perish, so I see them!
Lucifer. There
The son of her who snatch'd the apple spake!
But thou wouldst only perish, and not see them;
That sight is for the other state.
Cain. Of death?
Lucifer. That is the prelude.
Cain. Then I dread it less,
Now that I know it leads to something definite.
Lucifer. And now I will convey thee to thy world,
Where thou shalt multiply the race of Adam,
Eat, drink, toil, tremble, laugh, weep, sleep, and die.
Cain. And to what end have I beheld these things
Which thou hast shown me?
Lucifer. Didst thou not require
Knowledge? And have I not, in what I show'd,
Taught thee to know thyself?

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Cain. Alas! I seem
Nothing.
Lucifer. And this should be the human sum
Of knowledge, to know mortal nature's nothingness;
Bequeath that science to thy children, and
'T will spare them many tortures.
Cain. Haughty spirit!
Thou speak'st it proudly; but thyself, though proud,
Hast a superior.
Lucifer. No! By heaven, which He
Holds, and the abyss, and the immensity
Of worlds and life, which I hold with him — No!
I have a victor — true; but no superior.
Homage he has from all — but none from me:
I battle it against him, as I battled
In highest heaven. Through all eternity,
And the unfathomable gulfs of Hades,
And the interminable realms of space,
And the infinity of endless ages,
All, all, will I dispute! And world by world,
And star by star, and universe by universe
Shall tremble in the balance, till the great
Conflict shall cease, if ever it shall cease,
Which it ne'er shall, till he or I be quench'd!
And what can quench our immortality,
Or mutual and irrevocable hate?
He as a conqueror will call the conquer'd
Evil; but what will be the *good* he gives?
Were I the victor, *his* works would be deem'd
The only evil ones. And you, ye new
And scarce-born mortals, what have been his gifts
To you already, in your little world?
Cain. But few; and some of those but bitter.
Lucifer. Back
With me, then, to thine earth, and try the rest
Of his celestial boons to you and yours.
Evil and good are things in their own essence,
And not made good or evil by the giver;
But if he gives you good — so call him; if
Evil springs from *him*, do not name it *mine*,
Till ye know better its true fount; and judge
Not by words, though of spirits, but the fruits
Of your existence, such as it must be.
One good gift has the fatal apple given —
Your *reason:* — let it not be over-sway'd
By tyrannous threats to force you into faith

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'Gainst all external sense and inward feeling:
Think and endure, — and form an inner world
In your own bosom — where the outward fails;
So shall you nearer be the spiritual
Nature, and war triumphant with your own.

[*They disappear.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.

The Earth, near Eden, as in Act I.

Enter CAIN *and* ADAH

Adah. Hush! tread softly, Cain.
Cain. I will; but wherefore?
Adah. Our little Enoch sleeps upon yon bed
Of leaves, beneath the cypress.
Cain. Cypress! 't is
A gloomy tree, which looks as if it mourn'd
O'er what it shadows; wherefore didst thou choose it
For our child's canopy?
Adah. Because its branches
Shut out the sun like night, and therefore seem'd
Fitting to shadow slumber.
Cain. Ay, the last —
And longest; but no matter — lead me to him.

[*They go up to the child.*

How lovely he appears! his little cheeks,
In their pure incarnation, vying with
The rose leaves strewn beneath them.
Adah. And his lips, too,
How beautifully parted! No; you shall not
Kiss him, at least not now: he will awake soon —
His hour of mid-day rest is nearly over;
But it were pity to disturb him till
'T is closed.
Cain. You have said well; I will contain
My heart till then. He smiles, and sleeps! — Sleep on
And smile, thou little, young inheritor
Of a world scarce less young: sleep on, and smile!

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Thine are the hours and days when both are cheering
And innocent! *thou* hast not pluck'd the fruit —
Thou know'st not thou art naked! Must the time
Come thou shalt be amerced for sins unknown,
Which were not thine nor mine? But now sleep on!
His cheeks are reddening into deeper smiles,
And shining lids are trembling o'er his long
Lashes, dark as the cypress which waves o'er them;
Half open, from beneath them the clear blue
Laughs out, although in slumber. He must dream —
Of what? Of Paradise! — Ay! dream of it,
My disinherited boy! 'T is but a dream;
For never more thyself, thy sons, nor fathers,
Shall walk in that forbidden place of joy!

Adah. Dear Cain! Nay, do not whisper o'er our son
Such melancholy yearnings o'er the past:
Why wilt thou always mourn for Paradise?
Can we not make another?

Cain. Where?

Adah. Here, or
Where'er thou wilt: where'er thou art, I feel not
The want of this so much regretted Eden.
Have I not thee, our boy, our sire, and brother,
And Zillah — our sweet sister, and our Eve,
To whom we owe so much besides our birth?

Cain. Yes — death, too, is among the debts we owe her.

Adah. Cain! that proud spirit, who withdrew thee hence,
Hath sadden'd thine still deeper. I had hoped
The promised wonders which thou hast beheld,
Visions, thou say'st, of past and present worlds,
Would have composed thy mind into the calm
Of a contented knowledge; but I see
Thy guide hath done thee evil: still I thank him,
And can forgive him all, that he so soon
Hath given thee back to us.

Cain. So soon?

Adah. 'T is scarcely
Two hours since ye departed: two *long* hours
To *me*, but only *hours* upon the sun.

Cain. And yet I have approach'd that sun, and seen
Worlds which he once shone on, and never more
Shall light; and worlds he never lit: methought
Years had roll'd o'er my absence.

Adah. Hardly hours.

Cain. The mind then hath capacity of time,
And measures it by that which it beholds,

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Pleasing or painful; little or almighty.
I had beheld the immemorial works
Of endless beings; skirr'd extinguish'd worlds;
And, gazing on eternity, methought
I had borrow'd more by a few drops of ages
From its immensity: but now I feel
My littleness again. Well said the spirit,
That I was nothing!
Adah. Wherefore said he so?
Jehovah said not that.
Cain. No: *he* contents him
With making us the *nothing* which we are;
And after flattering dust with glimpses of
Eden and Immortality, resolves
It back to dust again — for what?
Adah. Thou know'st —
Even for our parents' error.
Cain. What is that
To us? they sinn'd, then *let them* die!
Adah. Thou hast not spoken well, nor is that thought
Thy own, but of the spirit who was with thee.
Would *I* could die for them, so *they* might live!
Cain. Why, so say I — provided that one victim
Might satiate the insatiable of life,
And that our little rosy sleeper there
Might never taste of death nor human sorrow,
Nor hand it down to those who spring from him.
Adah. How know we that some such atonement one day
May not redeem our race?
Cain. By sacrificing
The harmless for the guilty? what atonement
Were there? why, *we* are innocent: what have we
Done, that we must be victims for a deed
Before our birth, or need have victims to
Atone for this mysterious, nameless sin —
If it be such a sin to seek for knowledge?
Adah. Alas! thou sinnest now, my Cain: thy words
Sound impious in mine ears.
Cain. Then leave me!
Adah. Never,
Though thy God left thee.
Cain. Say, what have we here?
Adah. Two altars, which our brother Abel made
During thine absence, whereupon to offer
A sacrifice to God on thy return.
Cain. And how knew *he*, that *I* would be so ready

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With the burnt offerings, which he daily brings
With a meek brow, whose base humility
Shows more of fear than worship, as a bribe
To the Creator?

Adah. Surely, 't is well done.

Cain. One altar may suffice; *I* have no offering.

Adah. The fruits of the earth, the early, beautiful
Blossom and bud, and bloom of flowers, and fruits;
These are a goodly offering to the Lord,
Given with a gentle and a contrite spirit.

Cain. I have toil'd, and till'd, and sweaten in the sun
According to the curse: — must I do more?
For what should I be gentle? for a war
With all the elements ere they will yield
The bread we eat? For what must I be grateful?
For being dust, and groveling in the dust,
Till I return to dust? If I am nothing —
For nothing shall I be an hypocrite,
And seem well-pleased with pain? For what should I
Be contrite? for my father's sin, already
Expiate with what we all have undergone,
And to be more than expiated by
The ages prophesied, upon our seed.
Little deems our young blooming sleeper, there,
The germs of an eternal misery
To myriads is within him! better 't were
I snatch'd him in his sleep, and dash'd him 'gainst
The rocks, than let him live to ——

Adah. Oh, my God!
Touch not the child — my child! *thy* child! Oh Cain!

Cain. Fear not! for all the stars, and all the power
Which sways them, I would not accost yon infant
With ruder greeting than a father's kiss.

Adah. Then, why so awful in thy speech?

Cain. I said,
'T were better that he ceased to live, than give
Life to so much of sorrow as he must
Endure, and, harder still, bequeath; but since
That saying jars you, let us only say —
'T were better that he never had been born.

Adah. Oh, do not say so! Where were then the joys,
The mother's joys of watching, nourishing,
And loving him? Soft! he awakes. Sweet Enoch!
[*She goes to the child.*
Oh Cain! look on him; see how full of life,
Of strength, of bloom, of beauty, and of joy,

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How like to me — how like to thee, when gentle,
For *then* we are *all* alike; is 't not so, Cain?
Mother, and sire, and son, our features are
Reflected in each other; as they are
In the clear waters, when *they* are *gentle*, and
When *thou* art *gentle*. Love us, then, my Cain!
And love thyself for our sakes, for we love thee.
Look! how he laughs and stretches out his arms,
And opens wide his blue eyes upon thine,
To hail his father; while his little form
Flutters as wing'd with joy. Talk not of pain!
The childless cherubs well might envy thee
The pleasures of a parent! Bless him, Cain!
As yet he hath no words to thank thee, but
His heart will, and thine own too.

Cain. Bless thee, boy!
If that a mortal blessing may avail thee;
To save thee from the serpent's curse!

Adah. It shall.
Surely a father's blessing may avert
A reptile's subtlety.

Cain. Of that I doubt;
But bless him ne'er the less.

Adah. Our brother comes.

Cain. Thy brother Abel.

Enter ABEL.

Abel. Welcome, Cain! My brother,
The peace of God be on thee!

Cain. Abel, hail!

Abel. Our sister tells me that thou hast been wandering
In high communion with a spirit, far
Beyond our wonted range. Was he of those
We have seen and spoken with, like to our father?

Cain. No.

Abel. Why then commune with him? he may be
A foe to the Most High.

Cain. And friend to man.
Has the Most High been so — if so you term him?

Abel. Term him! your words are strange to-day, my brother.
My sister Adah, leave us for awhile —
We mean to sacrifice.

Adah. Farewell, my Cain;
But first embrace thy son. May his soft spirit,

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And Abel's pious ministry, recall thee
To peace and holiness! [*Exit* ADAH, *with her child.*
Abel. Where hast thou been?
Cain. I know not.
Abel. Nor what thou hast seen?
Cain. The dead,
The immortal, the unbounded, the omnipotent,
The overpowering mysteries of space —
The innumerable worlds that were and are —
A whirlwind of such overwhelming things,
Suns, moons, and earths, upon their loud-voiced spheres
Singing in thunder round me, as have made me
Unfit for mortal converse: leave me, Abel.
Abel. Thine eyes are flashing with unnatural light —
Thy cheek is flush'd with an unnatural hue —
Thy words are fraught with an unnatural sound —
What may this mean?
Cain. It means —— I pray thee, leave me.
Abel. Not till we have pray'd and sacrificed together.
Cain. Abel, I pray thee, sacrifice alone —
Jehovah loves thee well.
Abel. *Both* well, I hope.
Cain. But thee the better: I care not for that;
Thou art fitter for his worship than I am;
Revere him, then — but let it be alone —
At least, without me.
Abel. Brother, I should ill
Deserve the name of our great father's son,
If, as my elder, I revered thee not,
And in the worship of our God call'd not
On thee to join me, and precede me in
Our priesthood — 't is thy place.
Cain. But I have ne'er
Asserted it.
Abel. The more my grief; I pray thee
To do so now: thy soul seems labouring in
Some strong delusion; it will calm thee.
Cain. No;
Nothing can calm me more. *Calm!* say I? Never
Knew I what calm was in the soul, although
I have seen the elements still'd. My Abel, leave me!
Or let me leave thee to thy pious purpose.
Abel. Neither; we must perform our task together.
Spurn me not.
Cain. If it must be so —— well, then,
What shall I do?

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Abel. Choose one of those two altars.
Cain. Choose for me: they to me are so much turf
And stone.
Abel. Choose thou!
Cain. I have chosen.
Abel. 'T is the highest,
And suits thee, as the elder. Now prepare
Thine offerings.
Cain. Where are thine?
Abel. Behold them here —
The firstlings of the flock, and fat thereof —
A shepherd's humble offering.
Cain. I have no flocks;
I am a tiller of the ground, and must
Yield what it yieldeth to my toil — its fruit:
[*He gathers fruits.*
Behold them in their various bloom and ripeness.
[*They dress their altars and kindle a flame upon them*
Abel. My brother, as the elder, offer first
Thy prayer and thanksgiving with sacrifice.
Cain. No — I am new to this; lead thou the way,
And I will follow — as I may.
Abel (*kneeling*). Oh God!
Who made us, and who breathed the breath of life
Within our nostrils, who hath blessed us,
And spared, despite our father's sin, to make
His children all lost, as they might have been,
Had not thy justice been so temper'd with
The mercy which is thy delight, as to
Accord a pardon like a Paradise,
Compared with our great crimes: — Sole Lord of light!
Of good, and glory, and eternity;
Without whom all were evil, and with whom
Nothing can err, except to some good end
Of thine omnipotent benevolence —
Inscrutable, but still to be fulfill'd —
Accept from out thy humble first of shepherd's
First of the first-born flocks — an offering,
In itself nothing — as what offering can be
Aught unto thee? — but yet accept it for
The thanksgiving of him who spreads it in
The face of thy high heaven, bowing his own
Even to the dust, of which he is, in honour
Of thee, and of thy name, for evermore!
Cain (*standing erect during his speech*). Spirit! whate'er
or whatsoe'er thou art,

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Omnipotent, it may be — and, if good,
Shown in the exemption of thy deeds from evil;
Jehovah upon earth! and God in heaven!
And it may be with other names, because
Thine attributes seem many, as thy works: —
If thou must be propitiated with prayers,
Take them! If thou must be induced with altars,
And soften'd with a sacrifice, receive them!
Two beings here erect them unto thee.
If thou lov'st blood, the shepherd's shrine, which smokes
On my right hand, hath shed it for thy service
In the first of his flock, whose limbs now reek
In sanguinary incense to thy skies;
Or if the sweet and blooming fruits of earth,
And milder seasons, which the unstain'd turf
I spread them on now offers in the face
Of the broad sun which ripen'd them, may seem
Good to thee, inasmuch as they have not
Suffer'd in limb or life, and rather form
A sample of thy works, than supplication
To look on ours! If a shrine without victim,
And altar without gore, may win thy favour,
Look on it! and for him who dresseth it,
He is — such as thou mad'st him; and seeks nothing
Which must be won by kneeling: if he 's evil,
Strike him! thou art omnipotent, and may'st —
For what can he oppose? If he be good,
Strike him, or spare him, as thou wilt! since all
Rests upon thee; and good and evil seem
To have no power themselves, save in thy will;
And whether that be good or ill I know not,
Not being omnipotent, nor fit to judge
Omnipotence, but merely to endure
Its mandate; which thus far I have endured.

[*The fire upon the altar of* ABEL *kindles into a column of the brightest flame, and ascends to heaven; while a whirlwind throws down the altar of* CAIN, *and scatters the fruits abroad upon the earth.*

Abel (*kneeling*). Oh, brother, pray! Jehovah 's wroth with thee.

Cain. Why so?

Abel. Thy fruits are scatter'd on the earth.

Cain. From earth they came, to earth let them return;
Their seed will bear fresh fruit there ere the summer:
Thy burnt flesh-off'ring prospers better; see
How heav'n licks up the flames, when thick with blood!

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Abel. Think not upon my offering's acceptance,
But make another of thine own before
It is too late.
Cain. I will build no more altars,
Nor suffer any. —
Abel (*rising*). Cain! what meanest thou?
Cain. To cast down yon vile flatt'rer of the clouds,
The smoky harbinger of thy dull pray'rs —
Thine altar, with its blood of lambs and kids,
Which fed on milk, to be destroy'd in blood.
Abel (*opposing him*). Thou shalt not: — add not impious works to impious
Words! let that altar stand — 't is hallow'd now
By the immortal pleasure of Jehovah,
In his acceptance of the victims.
Cain. *His!*
His pleasure! what was his high pleasure in
The fumes of scorching flesh and smoking blood,
To the pain of the bleating mothers, which
Still yearn for their dead offspring? or the pangs
Of the sad ignorant victims underneath
Thy pious knife? Give way! this bloody record
Shall not stand in the sun, to shame creation!
Abel. Brother, give back! thou shalt not touch my altar
With violence: if that thou wilt adopt it,
To try another sacrifice, 't is thine.
Cain. Another sacrifice! Give way, or else
That sacrifice may be ——
Abel. What mean'st thou?
Cain. Give —
Give way! — thy God loves blood! — then look to it: —
Give way, ere he hath *more!*
Abel. In *his* great name,
I stand between thee and the shrine which hath
Had his acceptance.
Cain. If thou lov'st thyself,
Stand back till I have strew'd this turf along
Its native soil: — else ——
Abel, (*opposing him.*) I love God far more
Than life.
Cain (*striking him with a brand on the temples, which he snatches, from the altar*). Then take thy life unto thy God,
Since he loves lives.
Abel (*falls*). What hast thou done, my brother?
Cain. Brother!

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Abel. Oh, God! receive thy servant, and
Forgive his slayer, for he knew not what
He did. — Cain, give me — give me thy hand; and tell
Poor Zillah ——

Cain (*after a moment's stupefaction*). *My* hand! 't is all red, and with —
What?

[*A long pause. — Looking slowly round.*

Where am I? alone! Where 's Abel? where
Cain? Can it be that I am he? My brother,
Awake! — why liest thou so on the green earth?
'T is not the hour of slumber: — why so pale?
What, hast thou! —— thou wert full of life this morn!
Abel! I pray thee, mock me not! I smote
Too fiercely, but not fatally. Ah, why
Would'st thou oppose me? This is mockery;
And only done to daunt me: — 't was a blow —
And but a blow. Stir — stir — nay, only stir!
Why, so — that 's well! — thou breath'st! breathe upon me!
Oh, God! Oh, God!

Abel (*very faintly*). What 's he who speaks of God?

Cain. Thy murderer.

Abel. Then may God forgive him! Cain
Comfort poor Zillah: — she has but one brother
Now. [ABEL *dies.*

Cain. And I none! — Who makes me brotherless?
His eyes are open! then he is not dead!
Death is like sleep; and sleep shuts down our lids.
His lips, too, are apart; why then he breathes;
And yet I feel it not. — His heart! — his heart! —
Let me see, doth it beat? — methinks —— No! — no!
This is a vision, else I am become
The native of another and worse world.
The earth swims round me: — what is this? 't is wet;

[*Puts his hand to his brow, and then looks at it.*

And yet there are no dews! 'T is blood — my blood —
My brother's and my own; and shed by me!
Then what have I further to do with life,
Since I have taken life from my own flesh?
But he can not be dead! — Is silence death?
No; he will wake: then let me watch by him.
Life cannot be so slight, as to be quench'd
Thus quickly! — he hath spoken to me since —
What shall I say to him? — My brother! — No:
He will not answer to that name; for brethren

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Smite not each other. Yet — yet — speak to me.
Oh! for a word more of that gentle voice,
That I may bear to hear my own again!

Enter ZILLAH.

Zillah. I heard a heavy sound; what can it be?
'T is Cain; and watching by my husband. What
Dost thou there, brother? Doth he sleep? Oh! heav'n!
What means this paleness, and yon stream? — No! no!
It is not blood; for who would shed his blood?
Abel! what 's this? — who hath done this? He moves not;
He breathes not: and his hands drop down from mine
With stony lifelessness! Ah! cruel Cain!
Why cam'st thou not in time to save him from
This violence? Whatever hath assail'd him,
Thou wert the stronger, and should'st have stepp'd in
Between him and aggression! Father! — Eve! —
Adah! — come hither! Death is in the world!

[*Exit* ZILLAH, *calling on her Parents, &c.*

Cain (*solus*). And who hath brought him there? — I —
who abhor
The name of Death so deeply, that the thought
Empoison'd all my life, before I knew
His aspect — I have led him here, and giv'n
My brother to his cold and still embrace,
As if he would not have asserted his
Inexorable claim without my aid.
I am awake at last — a dreary dream
Had madden'd me; — but *he* shall ne'er awake!

Enter ADAM, EVE, ADAH, *and* ZILLAH.

Adam. A voice of woe from Zillah brings me here. —
What do I see? — 'T is true! — My son! — my son!
Woman, behold the serpent's work, and thine!

[*To* EVE.

Eve. Oh! speak not of it now: the serpent's fangs
Are in my heart. My best beloved, Abel!
Jehovah! this is punishment beyond
A mother's sin, to take *him* from me!

Adam. Who,
Or what hath done this deed? — speak, Cain, since thou
Wert present; was it some more hostile angel,
Who walks not with Jehovah? or some wild
Brute of the forest?

Eve. Ah! a livid light
Breaks through, as from a thunder-cloud! yon brand,

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Massy and bloody! snatch'd from off the altar,
And black with smoke, and red with ——
Adam. Speak, my son!
Speak, and assure us, wretched as we are,
That we are not more miserable still.
Adah. Speak, Cain! and say it was not *thou!*
Eve. It was.
I see it now — he hangs his guilty head,
And covers his ferocious eye with hands
Incarnadine.
Adah. Mother, thou dost him wrong —
Cain! clear thee from this horrible accusal,
Which grief wrings from our parent.
Eve. Hear, Jehovah!
May the eternal serpent's curse be on him!
For he was fitter for his seed than ours.
May all his days be desolate! May ——
Adah. Hold!
Curse him not, mother, for he is thy son —
Curse him not, mother, for he is my brother,
And my betroth'd.
Eve. He hath left thee no brother —
Zillah no husband — me *no son!* — for thus
I curse him from my sight for evermore!
All bonds I break between us, as he broke
That of his nature, in yon —— Oh death! death!
Why didst thou not take *me*, who first incurr'd thee?
Why dost thou not so now?
Adam. Eve! let not this,
Thy natural grief, lead to impiety!
A heavy doom was long forespoken to us;
And now that it begins, let it be borne
In such sort as may show our God, that we
Are faithful servants to his holy will.
Eve (*pointing to Cain*). *His will!!* the will of yon incarnate spirit
Of death, whom I have brought upon the earth
To strew it with the dead. May all the curses
Of life be on him!;and his agonies
Drive him forth o'er the wilderness, like us
From Eden, till his children do by him
As he did by his brother! May the swords
And wings of fiery cherubim pursue him
By day and night — snakes spring up in his path —
Earth's fruits be ashes in his mouth — the leaves
On which he lays his head to sleep be strew'd

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With scorpions! May his dreams be of his victim!
His waking a continual dread of death!
May the clear rivers turn to blood as he
Stoops down to stain them with his raging lip!
May every element shun or change to him!
May he live in the pangs which others die with!
And death itself wax something worse than death
To him who first acquainted him with man!
Hence, fratricide! henceforth that word is *Cain*,
Through all the coming myriads of mankind,
Who shall abhor thee, though thou wert their sire!
May the grass wither from thy feet! the woods
Deny thee shelter! earth a home! the dust
A grave! the sun his light! and heaven her God!

[*Exit* EVE.

Adam. Cain! get thee forth: we dwell no more together.
Depart! and leave the dead to me — I am
Henceforth alone — we never must meet more.

Adah. Oh, part not with him thus, my father: do not
Add thy deep curse to Eve's upon his head!

Adam. I curse him not: his spirit be his curse.
Come, Zillah!

Zillah. I must watch my husband's corse.

Adam. We will return again, when he is gone
Who hath provided for us this dread office.
Come, Zillah!

Zillah. Yet one kiss on yon pale clay,
And ose lips once so warm — my heart! my heart!

[*Exeunt* ADAM *and* ZILLAH, *weeping*.

Adah. Cain! thou hast heard, we must go forth. I am ready,
So shall our children be. I will bear Enoch,
And you his sister. Ere the sun declines
Let us depart, nor walk the wilderness
Under the cloud of night. Nay, speak to me.
To *me — thine own.*

Cain. Leave me!

Adah. Why, all have left thee.

Cain. And wherefore lingerest thou? Dost thou not fear
To dwell with one who hath done this?

Adah. I fear
Nothing except to leave thee, much as I
Shrink from the deed which leaves thee brotherless.
I must not speak of this — it is between thee
And the great God.

A Voice from within exclaims, Cain! Cain!

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Adah. Hear'st thou that voice?
The Voice within. Cain! Cain!
Adah. It soundeth like an angel's tone.

Enter the ANGEL *of the Lord.*

Angel. Where is thy brother Abel?
Cain. Am I then
My brother's keeper?
Angel. Cain! what hast thou done?
The voice of thy slain brother's blood cries out,
Even from the ground, unto the Lord! — Now art thou
Cursed from the earth, which opened late her mouth
To drink thy brother's blood from thy rash hand.
Henceforth, when thou shalt till the ground, it shall not
Yield thee her strength; a fugitive shalt thou
Be from this day, and vagabond on earth!
Adah. This punishment is more than he can bear.
Behold, thou drivest him from the face of earth,
And from the face of God shall he be hid.
A fugitive and vagabond on earth,
'T will come to pass, that whoso findeth him
Shall slay him.
Cain. Would they could! but who are they
Shall slay me? Where are these on the lone earth
As yet unpeopled?
Angel. Thou hast slain thy brother,
And who shall warrant thee against thy son?
Adah. Angel of Light! be merciful, nor say
That this poor aching breast now nourishes
A murderer in my boy, and of his father.
Angel. Then he would but be what his father is.
Did not the milk of Eve give nutriment
To him thou now see'st so besmear'd with blood?
The fratricide might well engender parricides. —
But it shall not be so — the Lord thy God
And mine commandeth me to set his seal
On Cain, so that he may go forth in safety.
Who slayeth Cain, a sevenfold vengeance shall
Be taken on his head. Come hither!
Cain. What
Wouldst thou with me?
Angel. To mark upon thy brow
Exemption from such deeds as thou hast done.
Cain. No, let me die!
Angel. It must not be.

[*The* ANGEL *sets the mark on* CAIN'S *brow,*

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Cain. It burns
My brow, but nought to that which is within it.
Is there more? let me meet it as I may.
Angel. Stern hast thou been and stubborn from the womb,
As the ground thou must henceforth till; but he
Thou slew'st was gentle as the flocks he tended.
Cain. After the fall too soon was I begotten;
Ere yet my mother's mind subsided from
The serpent, and my sire still mourn'd for Eden.
That which I am, I am; I did not seek
For life, nor did I make myself; but could I
With my own death redeem him from the dust —
And why not so? let him return to-day,
And I lie ghastly! so shall be restored
By God the life to him he loved; and taken
From me a being I ne'er loved to bear.
Angel. Who shall heal murder? what is done is done;
Go forth! fulfil thy days! and be thy deeds
Unlike the last! [*The* ANGEL *disappears.*
Adah. He 's gone, let us go forth;
I hear our little Enoch cry within
Our bower.
Cain. Ah! little knows he what he weeps for!
And I who have shed blood cannot shed tears!
But the four rivers (1) would not cleanse my soul.
Think'st thou my boy will bear to look on me?
Adah. If I thought that he would not, I would —
Cain (*interrupting her*). No,
No more of threats: we have had too many of them:
Go to our children; I will follow thee.
Adah. I will not leave thee lonely with the dead;
Let us depart together.
Cain. Oh! thou dead
And everlasting witness! whose unsinking
Blood darkens earth and heaven! what thou *now* art
I know not! but if *thou* see'st what *I* am,
I think thou wilt forgive him, whom his God
Can ne'er forgive, nor his own soul. — Farewell!
I must not, dare not touch what I have made thee.
I, who sprung from the same womb with thee, drain'd
The same breast, clasp'd thee often to my own,
In fondness brotherly and boyish, I

(1) The "four rivers" which flowed round Eden, and consequently the only waters with which Cain was acquainted upon earth.

Can never meet thee more, nor even dare
To do that for thee, which thou shouldst have done
For me — compose thy limbs into their grave —
The first grave yet dug for mortality.
But who hath dug that grave? Oh, earth! Oh, earth!
For all the fruits thou hast render'd to me, I
Give thee back this. — Now for the wilderness.

[ADAH *stoops down and kisses the body of* ABEL

Adah. A dreary, and an early doom, my brother,
Has been thy lot! Of all who mourn for thee,
I alone must not weep. My office is
Henceforth to dry up tears, and not to shed them;
But yet of all who mourn, none mourn like me,
Not only for thyself, but him who slew thee.
Now, Cain! I will divide thy burden with thee.

Cain. Eastward from Eden will we take our way;
'T is the most desolate, and suits my steps.

Adah. Lead! thou shalt be my guide, and may our God
Be thine! Now let us carry forth our children.

Cain. And *he* who lieth there was childless. I
Have dried the fountain of a gentle race,
Which might have graced his recent marriage couch,
And might have temper'd this stern blood of mine,
Uniting with our children Abel's offspring!
O Abel.

Adah Peace be with him!

Cain. But with *me!* ——

[*Exeunt.*

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MARINO FALIERO,

DOGE OF VENICE;

AN HISTORICAL TRAGEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

'Dux inquieti turbidus Adriæ." — HORACE.

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PREFACE.

THE conspiracy of the Doge Marino Faliero is one of the most remarkable events in the annals of the most singular government, city, and people of modern history. It occurred in the year 1355. Every thing about Venice is, or was, extraordinary—her aspect is like a dream, and her history is like a romance. The story of this Doge is to be found in all her Chronicles, and particularly detailed in the "Lives of the Doges," by Marin Sanuto, which is given in the Appendix. It is simply and clearly related, and is perhaps more dramatic in itself than any scenes which can be founded upon the subject.

Marino Faliero appears to have been a man of talents and of courage. I find him commander in chief of the land forces at the siege of Zara, where he beat the King of Hungary and his army of 80,000 men, killing 8000 men, and keeping the besieged at the same time in check; an exploit to which I know none similar in history, except that of Cæsar at Alesia, and of Prince Eugene at Belgrade. He was afterwards commander of the fleet in the same war. He took Capo d'Istria. He was ambassador at Genoa and Rome,—at which last he received the news of his election to the dukedom; his absence being a proof that he sought it by no intrigue, since he was apprized of his predecessor's death and his own succession at the same moment. But he appears to have been of an ungovernable temper. A story is told by Sanuto, of his having, many years before, when podesta and captain at Treviso, boxed the ears of the bishop, who was somewhat tardy in bringing the Host. For this, honest Sanuto "saddles him with a judgment," as Thwackum did Square; but he does not tell us whether he was punished or rebuked by the Senate for this outrage at the time of its commission. He seems, indeed, to have been afterwards at peace with the

church, for we find him ambassador at Rome, and invested with the fief of Val di Marino, in the march of Treviso, and with the title of Count, by Lorenzo Count-bishop of Ceneda. For these facts my authorities are Sanuto, Vettor Sandi, Andrea Navagero, and the account of the siege of Zara, first published by the indefatigable Abate Morelli, in his "Monumenti Veneziani di varia Letteratura," printed in 1796, all of which I have looked over in the original language. The moderns, Darù, Sismondi, and Laugier, nearly agree with the ancient chroniclers. Sismondi attributes the conspiracy to his *jealousy*; but I find this nowhere asserted by the national historians. Vettor Sandi, indeed, says, that "Altri scrissero che ..... dalla gelosa suspizion di esso Doge siasi fatto (Michel Steno) staccar con violenza," &c. &c.; but this appears to have been by no means the general opinion, nor is it alluded to by Sanuto or by Navagero; and Sandi himself adds, a moment after, that "per altre Veneziane memorie traspiri, che non il *solo* desiderio di vendetta lo dispose alla congiura ma anche la innata abituale ambizion sua, per cui anelava a farsi principe independente." The first motive appears to have been excited by the gross affront of the words written by Michel Steno on the ducal chair, and by the light and inadequate sentence of the Forty on the offender, who was one of their "tre Capi." The attentions of Steno himself appear to have been directed towards one of her damsels, and not to the "Dogaressa" herself, against whose fame not the slightest insinuation appears, while she is praised for her beauty, and remarked for her youth. Neither do I find it asserted (unless the hint of Sandi be an assertion), that the Doge was actuated by jealousy of his wife; but rather by respect for her, and for his own honour, warranted by his past services and present dignity.

I know not that the historical facts are alluded to in English, unless by Dr. Moore in his View of Italy. His account is false and flippant, full of stale jests about old men and young wives, and wondering at so great an effect from so slight a cause. How so acute and severe an observer of mankind as the author of Zeluco could wonder at this is inconceivable. He knew that a basin of water spilt on Mrs. Masham's gown deprived the Duke of Marlborough of his command, and led to the inglorious peace

of Utrecht — that Louis XIV. was plunged into the most desolating wars because his minister was nettled at his finding fault with a window, and wished to give him another occupation — that Helen lost Troy — that Lucretia expelled the Tarquins from Rome — and that Cava brought the Moors to Spain — that an insulted husband led the Gauls to Clusium, and thence to Rome — that a single verse of Frederick II. of Prussia on the Abbé de Bernis, and a jest on Madame de Pompadour, led to the battle of Rosbach — that the elopement of Dearbhorgil with Mac Murchad conducted the English to the slavery of Ireland — that a personal pique between Maria Antoinette and the Duke of Orleans precipitated the first expulsion of the Bourbons — and, not to multiply instances, that Commodus, Domitian, and Caligula fell victims not to their public tyranny, but to private vengeance — and that an order to make Cromwell disembark from the ship in which he would have sailed to America destroyed both king and commonwealth. After these instances, on the least reflection, it is indeed extraordinary in Dr. Moore to seem surprised that a man used to command, who had served and swayed in the most important offices, should fiercely resent, in a fierce age, an unpunished affront, the grossest that can be offered to a man, be he prince or peasant. The age of Faliero is little to the purpose, unless to favour it —

> " The young man's wrath is like straw on fire,
> *But like red hot steel is the old man's ire.*"
>
> " Young men soon give and soon forget affronts,
> Old age is slow at both."

Laugier's reflections are more philosophical : — " Tale fù il fine ignominioso di un' uomo, che la sua nascità, la sua età, il suo carattere dovevano tener lontano dalle passioni produttrici di grandi delitti. I suoi *talenti* per lungo tempo esercitati ne' maggiori impieghi, la sua capacità sperimentata ne' governi e nelle ambasciate, gli avevano acquistato la stima e la fiducia de' cittadini, ed avevano uniti i suffragj per collocarlo alla testa della republica. Innalzato ad un grado che terminava gloriosamente la sua vita, il risentimento di un' ingiuria leggiera insinuò nel suo cuore tal veleno che bastò a corrompere le antiche sue qualità, e a condurlo al termine dei scellerati ; serio esempio, che prova

non esservi età, in cui la prudenza umana sia sicura, e che nell' uomo restano sempre passioni capaci a disonorarlo, quando non invigili sopra se stesso." — *Laugier, Italian translation*, vol. iv. page 30, 31.

Where did Dr. Moore find that Marino Faliero begged his life? I have searched the chroniclers, and find nothing of the kind; it is true that he avowed all. He was conducted to the place of torture, but there is no mention made of any application for mercy on his part; and the very circumstance of their having taken him to the rack seems to argue any thing but his having shown a want of firmness, which would doubtless have been also mentioned by those minute historians who by no means favour him: such, indeed, would be contrary to his character as a soldier, to the age in which he lived, and *at* which he died, as it is to the truth of history. I know no justification, at any distance of time, for calumniating an historical character: surely truth belongs to the dead, and to the unfortunate; and they who have died upon a scaffold have generally had faults enough of their own, without attributing to them that which the very incurring of the perils which conducted them to their violent death renders, of all others, the most improbable. The black veil which is painted over the place of Marino Faliero amongst the Doges, and the Giants' Staircase where he was crowned, and discrowned, and decapitated, struck forcibly upon my imagination; as did his fiery character and strange story. I went, in 1819, in search of his tomb more than once to the church San Giovanni e San Paolo; and, as I was standing before the monument of another family, a priest came up to me and said, "I can show you finer monuments than that." I told him that I was in search of that of the Faliero family, and particularly of the Doge Marino's. "Oh," said he, "I will show it you;" and conducting me to the outside, pointed out a sarcophagus in the wall with an illegible inscription. He said that it had been in a convent adjoining, but was removed after the French came, and placed in its present situation; that he had seen the tomb opened at its removal; there were still some bones remaining, but no positive vestige of the decapitation. The equestrian statue of which I have made mention in the third act as before that church is not, however, of a Faliero,

but of some other now obsolete warrior, although of a later date. There were two other Doges of this family prior to Marino: Ordelafo, who fell in battle at Zara in 1117 (where his descendant afterwards conquered the Huns), and Vital Faliero, who reigned in 1082. The family, originally from Fano, was of the most illustrious in blood and wealth in the city of once the most wealthy and still the most ancient families in Europe. The length I have gone into on this subject will show the interest I have taken in it. Whether I have succeeded or not in the tragedy, I have at least transferred into our language an historical fact worthy of commemoration.

It is now four years that I have meditated this work; and before I had sufficiently examined the records, I was rather disposed to have made it turn on a jealousy in Faliero. But perceiving no foundation for this in historical truth, and aware that jealousy is an exhausted passion in the drama, I have given it a more historical form. I was, besides, well advised by the late Matthew Lewis on that point, in talking with him of my intention at Venice in 1817. "If you make him jealous," said he, "recollect that you have to contend with established writers, to say nothing of Shakspeare, and an exhausted subject; — stick to the old fiery Doge's natural character, which will bear you out, if properly drawn; and make your plot as regular as you can." Sir William Drummond gave me nearly the same counsel. How far I have followed these instructions, or whether they have availed me, is not for me to decide. I have had no view to the stage; in its present state it is, perhaps, not a very exalted object of ambition; besides, I have been too much behind the scenes to have thought it so at any time. And I cannot conceive any man of irritable feeling putting himself at the mercies of an audience. The sneering reader, and the loud critic, and the tart review, are scattered and distant calamities; but the trampling of an intelligent or of an ignorant audience on a production which, be it good or bad, has been a mental labour to the writer, is a palpable and immediate grievance, heightened by a man's doubt of their competency to judge, and his certainty of his own imprudence in electing them his judges. Were I capable of writing a play which could be deemed stage-worthy, success would give

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me no pleasure, and failure great pain. It is for this reason that, even during the time of being one of the committee of one of the theatres, I never made the attempt, and never will.(1) But surely there is dramatic power somewhere, where Joanna Baillie, and Millman, and John Wilson exist. The "City of the Plague" and the "Fall of Jerusalem" are full of the best "*materiel*" for tragedy that has been seen since Horace Walpole, except passages of Ethwald and De Montfort. It is the fashion to underrate Horace Walpole; firstly, because he was a nobleman, and secondly, because he was a gentleman; but, to say nothing of the composition of his incomparable letters, and of the Castle of Otranto, he is the "Ultimus Romanorum," the author of the Mysterious Mother, a tragedy of the highest order, and not a puling love-play. He is the father of the first romance and of the last tragedy in our language, and surely worthy of a higher place than any living writer, be he who he may.

In speaking of the drama of Marino Faliero, I forgot to mention, that the desire of preserving, though still too remote, a nearer approach to unity than the irregularity, which is the reproach of the English theatrical compositions, permits, has induced me to represent the conspiracy as already formed, and the Doge ac-

(1) While I was in the sub-committee of Drury Lane Theatre, I can vouch for my colleagues, and I hope for myself, that we did our best to bring back the legitimate drama. I tried what I could to get "De Montfort" revived, but in vain, and equally in vain in favour of Sotheby's "Ivan," which was thought an acting play; and I endeavoured also to wake Mr. Coleridge to write a tragedy. Those who are not in the secret will hardly believe that the "School for Scandal" is the play which has brought *least money*, averaging the number of times it has been acted since its production; so Manager Dibdin assured me. Of what has occurred since Maturin's "Bertram," I am not aware; so that I may be traducing, through ignorance, some excellent new writers: if so, I beg their pardon. I have been absent from England nearly five years, and, till last year, I never read an English newspaper since my departure, and am now only aware of theatrical matters through the medium of the Parisian Gazette of Galignani, and only for the last twelve months. Let me then deprecate all offence to tragic or comic writers, to whom I wish well, and of whom I know nothing. The long complaints of the actual state of the drama arise, however, from no fault of the performers. I can conceive nothing better than Kemble, Cooke, and Kean in their very different manners, or than Elliston in *gentleman's* comedy, and in some parts of tragedy. Miss O'Niell I never saw, having made and kept a determination to see nothing which should divide or disturb my recollection of Siddons. Siddons and Kemble were the *ideal* of tragic action; I never saw any thing at all resembling them even in *person*: for this reason, we shall never see again Coriolanus or Macbeth. When Kean is blamed for want of dignity, we should remember that it is a grace and not an art, and not to be attained by study. In all, *not super*-natural parts, he is perfect; even his very defects belong, or seem to belong, to the parts themselves, and appear truer to nature. But of Kemble we may say, with reference to his acting, what the Cardinal de Retz said of the Marquis of Montrose, "that he was the only man he ever saw who reminded him of the heroes of Plutarch."

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ceding to it; whereas, in fact, it was of his own preparation and that of Israel Bertuccio. The other characters (except that of the Duchess), incidents, and almost the time, which was wonderfully short for such a design in real life, are strictly historical, except that all the consultations took place in the palace. Had I followed this. the unity would have been better preserved; but I wished to produce the Doge in the full assembly of the conspirators, instead of monotonously placing him always in dialogue with the same individuals. For the real facts, I refer to the Appendix.

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DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

MARINO FALIERO, *Doge of Venice.*
BERTUCCIO FALIERO, *Nephew of the Doge.*
LIONI, *a Patrician and Senator.*
BENINTENDE, *Chief of the Council of Ten.*
MICHEL STENO, *One of the three Capi of the Forty.*
ISRAEL BERTUCCIO, *Chief of the Arsenal,*
PHILIP CALENDARO,
DAGOLINO,
BERTRAM,
} *Conspirators.*
Signor of the Night, { "*Signore di Notte,*" *one of the Officers belonging to the Republic.*
First Citizen.
Second Citizen.
Third Citizen.
VINCENZO,
PIETRO,
BATTISTA,
} *Officers belonging to the Duca*[1] *Palace*
Secretary of the Council of Ten.
Guards, Conspirators, Citizens, The Council of Ten, The Giunta, &c. &c.

WOMEN.

ANGIOLINA, *Wife to the Doge.*
MARIANNA, *her Friend.*
Female Attendants, &c.

Scene VENICE — in the year 1355.

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MARINO FALIERO.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

An Antechamber in the Ducal Palace.

PIETRO *speaks, in entering, to* BATTISTA.

Pie. Is not the messenger return'd?
Bat. Not yet;
I have sent frequently, as you commanded,
But still the Signory is deep in council,
And long debate on Steno's accusation.
Pie. Too long — at least so thinks the Doge.
Bat. How bears he
These moments of suspense?
Pie. With struggling patience.
Placed at the ducal table, cover'd o'er
With all the apparel of the state; petitions,
Despatches, judgments, acts, reprieves, reports,
He sits as rapt in duty; but whene'er
He hears the jarring of a distant door,
Or aught that intimates a coming step,
Or murmur of a voice, his quick eye wanders,
And he will start up from his chair, then pause,
And seat himself again, and fix his gaze
Upon some edict; but I have observed
For the last hour he has not turn'd a leaf.
Bat. 'T is said he is much moved, and doubtless 't was
Foul scorn in Steno to offend so grossly.
Pie. Ay, if a poor man: Steno 's a patrician,
Young, galliard, gay, and haughty.
Bat. Then you think
He will not be judged hardly?

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Pie. 'T were enough
He be judged justly; but 't is not for us
To anticipate the sentence of the Forty.
Bat. And here it comes. — What news, Vincenzo?

Enter VINCENZO.

Vin. 'T is
Decided; but as yet his doom's unknown:
I saw the president in act to seal
The parchment which will bear the Forty's judgment
Unto the Doge, and hasten to inform him. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

The Ducal Chamber.

MARINO FALIERO, *Doge; and his Nephew,* BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

Ber. F. It cannot be but they will do you justice.
Doge. Ay, such as the Avogadori did,
Who sent up my appeal unto the Forty
To try him by his peers, his own tribunal.
Ber. F. His peers will scarce protect him; such an act
Would bring contempt on all authority.
Doge. Know you not Venice? Know you not the Forty
But we shall see anon.
Ber. F. (*addressing* VINCENZO, *then entering.*)
How now — what tidings?
Vin. I am charged to tell his highness that the court
Has pass'd its resolution, and that, soon
As the due forms of judgment are gone through,
The sentence will be sent up to the Doge;
In the mean time the Forty doth salute
The Prince of the Republic, and entreat
His acceptation of their duty.
Doge. Yes —
They are wond'rous dutiful, and ever humble.
Sentence is pass'd, you say?
Vin. It is, your highness:
The president was sealing it, when I
Was call'd in, that no moment might be lost
In forwarding the intimation due

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Not only to the Chief of the Republic,
But the complainant, both in one united.
Ber. F. Are you aware, from aught you have perceived,
Of their decision?
Vin. No, my lord; you know
The secret custom of the courts in Venice.
Ber. F. True; but there still is something given to guess,
Which a shrewd gleaner and quick eye would catch at;
A whisper, or a murmur, or an air
More or less solemn spread o'er the tribunal.
The Forty are but men — most worthy men,
And wise, and just, and cautious — this I grant —
And secret as the grave to which they doom
The guilty; but with all this, in their aspects —
At least in some, the juniors of the number —
A searching eye, an eye like yours, Vincenzo,
Would read the sentence ere it was pronounced.
Vin. My lord, I came away upon the moment,
And had no leisure to take note of that
Which pass'd among the judges, even in seeming;
My station near the accused, too, Michel Steno,
Made me ——
Doge (*abruptly*). And how look'd *he?* deliver that.
Vin. Calm, but not overcast, he stood resign'd
To the decree, whate'er it were; — but lo!
It comes, for the perusal of his highness.

Enter the SECRETARY *of the Forty.*

Sec. The high tribunal of the Forty sends
Health and respect to the Doge Faliero,
Chief Magistrate of Venice, and requests
His highness to peruse and to approve
The sentence pass'd on Michel Steno, born
Patrician, and arraign'd upon the charge
Contain'd, together with its penalty,
Within the rescript which I now present.
Doge. Retire, and wait without.
[*Exeunt* SECRETARY *and* VINCENZO.
Take thou this paper:
The misty letters vanish from my eyes;
I cannot fix them.
Ber. F. Patience, my dear uncle:
Why do you tremble thus? — nay, doubt not, all
Will be as could be wish'd.
Doge. Say on.

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Ber. F. (*reading*). "Decreed
In council, without one dissenting voice,
That Michel Steno, by his own confession,
Guilty on the last night of Carnival
Of having graven on the ducal throne
The following words ——"
Doge. Would'st thou repeat them?
Would'st *thou* repeat them — *thou*, a Faliero,
Harp on the deep dishonour of our house,
Dishonour'd in its chief — that chief the prince
Of Venice, first of cities? — To the sentence.
Ber. F. Forgive me, my good lord; I will obey —
(*Reads.*) "That Michel Steno be detain'd a month
In close arrest."
Doge. Proceed.
Ber. F. My lord, 't is finish'd.
Doge. How, say you? — finish'd! Do I dream? — 't is false —
Give me the paper — (*Snatches the paper and reads*) —
"'T is decreed in council
That Michel Steno" —— Nephew, thine arm!
Ber. F. Nay,
Cheer up, be calm; this transport is uncall'd for —
Let me seek some assistance.
Doge. Stop, sir — Stir not —
'T is past.
Ber. F. I cannot but agree with you
The sentence is too slight for the offence —
It is not honourable in the Forty
To affix so slight a penalty to that
Which was a foul affront to you, and even
To them, as being your subjects; but 't is not
Yet without remedy: you can appeal
To them once more, or to the Avogadori,
Who, seeing that true justice is withheld,
Will now take up the cause they once declined,
And do you right upon the bold delinquent.
Think you not thus, good uncle? why do you stand
So fix'd? You heed me not: — I pray you, hear me!
Doge (*dashing down the ducal bonnet, and offering to trample upon it, exclaims as he is withheld by his nephew*)
Oh! that the Saracen were in St. Mark's!
Thus would I do him homage.
Ber. F. For the sake
Of Heaven and all its saints, my lord ——

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Doge. Away!
Oh, that the Genoese were in the port!
Oh, that the Huns whom I o'erthrew at Zara
Were ranged around the palace!
Ber. F. 'T is not well
In Venice' Duke to say so.
Doge. Venice' Duke!
Who now is Duke in Venice? let me see him,
That he may do me right.
Ber. F. If you forget
Your office, and its dignity and duty,
Remember that of man, and curb this passion.
The Duke of Venice ——
Doge (*interrupting him*). There is no such thing —
It is a word — nay, worse — a worthless by-word:
The most despised, wrong'd, outraged, helpless wretch,
Who begs his bread, if 't is refused by one,
May win it from another kinder heart;
But he, who is denied his right by those
Whose place it is to do no wrong, is poorer
Than the rejected beggar — he 's a slave —
And that am I, and thou, and all our house,
Even from this hour; the meanest artisan
Will point the finger, and the haughty noble
May spit upon us: — where is our redress?
Ber. F. The law, my prince? ——
Doge (*interrupting him*). You see what it has done —
I ask'd no remedy but from the law —
I sought no vengeance but redress by law —
I call'd no judges but those named by law —
As sovereign, I appeal'd unto my subjects,
The very subjects who had made me sovereign,
And gave me thus a double right to be so.
The rights of place and choice, of birth and service,
Honours and years, these scars, these hoary hairs,
The travel, toil, the perils, the fatigues,
The blood and sweat of almost eighty years,
Were weigh'd i' the balance, 'gainst the foulest stain,
The grossest insult, most contemptuous crime
Of a rank, rash patrician — and found wanting!
And this is to be borne!
Ber. F. I say not that: —
In case your fresh appeal should be rejected,
We will find other means to make all even.
Doge. Appeal again! art thou my brother's son?
A scion of the house of Faliero?

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The nephew of a Doge? and of that blood
Which hath already given three dukes to Venice?
But thou say'st well — we must be humble now.
Ber. F. My princely uncle! you are too much moved: —
I grant it was a gross offence, and grossly
Left without fitting punishment: but still
This fury doth exceed the provocation,
Or any provocation: if we are wrong'd,
We will ask justice; if it be denied,
We 'll take it; but may do all this in calmness —
Deep Vengeance is the daughter of deep Silence.
I have yet scarce a third part of your years,
I love our house, I honour you, its chief,
The guardian of my youth, and its instructor —
But though I understand your grief, and enter
In part of your disdain, it doth appal me
To see your anger, like our Adrian waves,
O'ersweep all bounds, and foam itself to air.
Doge. I tell thee — *must* I tell thee — what thy father
Would have required no words to comprehend?
Hast thou no feeling save the external sense
Of torture from the touch? hast thou no soul —
No pride — no passion — no deep sense of honour?
Ber. F. 'T is the first time that honour has been doubted,
And were the last, from any other sceptic.
Doge. You know the full offence of this born villain,
This creeping, coward, rank, acquitted felon,
Who threw his sting into a poisonous libel,
And on the honour of — Oh God! — my wife,
The nearest, dearest part of all men's honour,
Left a base slur to pass from mouth to mouth
Of loose mechanics, with all coarse foul comments,
And villanous jests, and blasphemies obscene;
While sneering nobles, in more polish'd guise,
Whisper'd the tale, and smiled upon the lie
Which made me look like them — a courteous wittol,
Patient — ay, proud, it may be, of dishonour.
Ber. F. But still it was a lie — you knew it false,
And so did all men.
Doge. Nephew, the high Roman
Said, " Cæsar's wife must not even be suspected,"
And put her from him.
Ber. F. True — but in those days ——
Doge. What is it that a Roman would not suffer,
That a Venetian prince must bear? Old Dandolo
Refused the diadem of all the Cæsars,

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And wore the ducal cap I trample on,
Because 't is now degraded.
Ber. F. 'T is even so.
Doge. It is — it is ; — I did not visit on
The innocent creature thus most vilely slander'd
Because she took an old man for her lord,
For that he had been long her father's friend
And patron of her house, as if there were
No love in woman's heart but lust of youth
And beardless faces ; — I did not for this
Visit the villain's infamy on her,
But craved my country's justice on his head,
The justice due unto the humblest being
Who hath a wife whose faith is sweet to him,
Who hath a home whose hearth is dear to him,
Who hath a name whose honour 's all to him,
When these are tainted by the accursing breath
Of calumny and scorn.
Ber. F. And what redress
Did you expect as his fit punishment ?
Doge. Death ! Was I not the sovereign of the state —
Insulted on his very throne, and made
A mockery to the men who should obey me ?
Was I not injured as a husband ? scorn'd
As man ? reviled, degraded, as a prince ?
Was not offence like his a complication
Of insult and of treason ? — and he lives !
Had he instead of on the Doge's throne
Stamp'd the same brand upon a peasant's stool,
His blood had gilt the threshold ; for the carle
Had stabbed him on the instant.
Ber. F. Do not doubt it,
He shall not live till sunset — leave to me
The means, and calm yourself.
Doge. Hold, nephew : this
Would have sufficed but yesterday ; at present
I have no further wrath against this man.
Ber. F. What mean you ? is not the offence redoubled
By this most rank — I will not say — acquittal ;
For it is worse, being full acknowledgment
Of the offence, and leaving it unpunish'd ?
Doge. It is *redoubled*, but not now by him :
The Forty hath decreed a month's arrest —
We must obey the Forty.
Ber. F. Obey *them !*
Who have forgot their duty to the sovereign ?

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Doge. Why yes; — boy, you perceive it then at last:
Whether as fellow-citizen who sues
For justice, or as sovereign who commands it,
They have defrauded me of both my rights
(For here the sovereign is a citizen);
But, notwithstanding, harm not thou a hair
Of Steno's head — he shall not wear it long.

Ber. F. Not twelve hours longer, had you left to me
The mode and means; if you had calmly heard me,
I never meant this miscreant should escape,
But wish'd you to suppress such gusts of passion,
That we more surely might devise together
His taking off.

Doge. No, nephew, he must live;
At least, just now — a life so vile as his
Were nothing at this hour; in th' olden time
Some sacrifices ask'd a single victim,
Great expiations had a hecatomb.

Ber. F. Your wishes are my law: and yet I fain
Would prove to you how near unto my heart
The honour of our house must ever be.

Doge. Fear not; you shall have time and place of proof:
But be not thou too rash, as I have been.
I am ashamed of my own anger now;
I pray you, pardon me.

Ber. F. Why that 's my uncle!
The leader, and the statesman, and the chief
Of commonwealths, and sovereign of himself!
I wonder'd to perceive you so forget
All prudence in your fury at these years,
Although the cause ——

Doge. Ay, think upon the cause —
Forget it not: — When you lie down to rest,
Let it be black among your dreams; and when
The morn returns, so let it stand between
The sun and you, as an ill-omen'd cloud
Upon a summer-day of festival:
So will it stand to me; — but speak not, stir not, —
Leave all to me; — we shall have much to do,
And you shall have a part. — But now retire,
'T is fit I were alone.

Ber. F. (*taking up and placing the ducal bonnet on the table.*) Ere I depart,
I pray you to resume what you have spurn'd,
Till you can change it haply for a crown.
And now I take my leave, imploring you

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In all things to rely upon my duty
As doth become your near and faithful kinsman,
And not less loyal citizen and subject.
[*Exit* BERTUCCIO FALIERO.
Doge (*solus*). Adieu, my worthy nephew. — Hollow bauble! [*Taking up the ducal cap.*
Beset with all the thorns that line a crown,
Without investing the insulted brow
With the all-swaying majesty of kings;
Thou idle, gilded, and degraded toy,
Let me resume thee as I would a vizor. [*Puts it on.*
How my brain aches beneath thee! and my temples
Throb feverish under thy dishonest weight.
Could I not turn thee to a diadem?
Could I not shatter the Briarean sceptre
Which in this hundred-handed senate rules,
Making the people nothing, and the prince
A pageant? In my life I have achieved
Tasks not less difficult — achieved for them,
Who thus repay me! — Can I not requite them?
Oh for one year! Oh! but for even a day
Of my full youth, while yet my body served
My soul as serves the generous steed his lord,
I would have dash'd among them, asking few
In aid to overthrow these swoln patricians;
But now I must look round for other hands
To serve this hoary head; — but it shall plan
In such a sort as will not leave the task
Herculean, though as yet 't is but a chaos
Of darkly brooding thoughts: my fancy is
In her first work, more nearly to the light
Holding the sleeping images of things
For the selection of the pausing judgment. —
The troops are few in ——

Enter VINCENZO.

Vin. There is one without
Craves audience of your highness.
Doge. I 'm unwell —
I can see no one, not even a patrician —
Let him refer his business to the council.
Vin. My lord, I will deliver your reply;
It cannot much import — he 's a plebeian,
The master of a galley, I believe.
Doge. How! did you say the patron of a galley;
That is — I mean — a servant of the state!

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Admit him, he may be on public service.

[*Exit* VINCENZO.

Doge (*solus*). This patron may be sounded; I will try him.

I know the people to be discontented:
They have cause, since Sapienza's adverse day,
When Genoa conquer'd: they have further cause,
Since they are nothing in the state, and in
The city worse than nothing — mere machines,
To serve the nobles' most patrician pleasure.
The troops have long arrears of pay, oft promised,
And murmur deeply — any hope of change
Will draw them forward: they shall pay themselves
With plunder: — but the priests — I doubt the priesthood
Will not be with us; they have hated me
Since that rash hour, when, madden'd with the drone,
I smote the tardy bishop at Treviso, (1)
Quickening his holy march; yet, ne'ertheless,
They may be won, at least their chief at Rome,
By some well-timed concessions; but, above
All things, I must be speedy: at my hour
Of twilight little light of life remains.
Could I free Venice, and avenge my wrongs,
I had lived too long, and willingly would sleep
Next moment with my sires; and, wanting this,
Better that sixty of my fourscore years
Had been already where — how soon, I care not —
The whole must be extinguish'd; — better that
They ne'er had been, than drag me on to be
The thing these arch-oppressors fain would make me.
Let me consider — of efficient troops
There are three thousand posted at ——

Enter VINCENZO *and* ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Vin. May it please
Your highness, the same patron whom I spake of
Is here to crave your patience.

Doge. Leave the chamber,
Vincenzo. — [*Exit* VINCENZO.
Sir, you may advance — what would you?

I. Ber. Redress.

Doge. Of whom?

I. Ber. Of God and of the Doge.

Doge. Alas! my friend, you seek it of the twain

(1) An historical fact. See Marin Sanuto's Lives of the Doges.

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Of least respect and interest in Venice.
You must address the council.
I. Ber. 'T were in vain;
For he who injured me is one of them.
Doge. There 's blood upon thy face — how came it there?
I. Ber. 'T is mine, and not the first I 've shed for Venice,
But the first shed by a Venetian hand:
A noble smote me.
Doge. Doth he live?
I. Ber. Not long —
But for the hope I had and have, that you,
My prince, yourself a soldier, will redress
Him, whom the laws of discipline and Venice
Permit not to protect himself; — if not —
I say no more.
Doge. But something you would do —
Is it not so?
I. Ber. I am a man, my lord.
Doge. Why so is he who smote you.
I. Ber. He is call'd so;
Nay, more, a noble one — at least, in Venice:
But since he hath forgotten that I am one,
And treats me like a brute, the brute may turn —
'T is said the worm will.
Doge. Say — his name and lineage?
I. Ber. Barbaro.
Doge. What was the cause? or the pretext?
I. Ber. I am the chief of the arsenal, employ'd
At present in repairing certain galleys
But roughly used by the Genoese last year.
This morning comes the noble Barbaro
Full of reproof, because our artisans
Had left some frivolous order of his house,
To execute the state's decree; I dared
To justify the men — he raised his hand; —
Behold my blood! the first time it e'er flow'd
Dishonourably.
Doge. Have you long time served?
I. Ber. So long as to remember Zara's siege,
And fight beneath the chief who beat the Huns there,
Sometime my general, now the Doge Faliero. —
Doge. How! are we comrades? — the state's ducal robes
Sit newly on me, and you were appointed
Chief of the arsenal ere I came from Rome;

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So that I recognised you not. Who placed you?
I. Ber. The late Doge; keeping still my old command
As patron of a galley: my new office
Was given as the reward of certain scars
(So was your predecessor pleased to say):
I little thought his bounty would conduct me
To his successor as a helpless plaintiff;
At least, in such a cause.
Doge. Are you much hurt?
I. Ber. Irreparably in my self-esteem.
Doge. Speak out; fear nothing: being stung at heart,
What would you do to be revenged on this man?
I. Ber. That which I dare not name, and yet will do.
Doge. Then wherefore came you here?
I. Ber. I come for justice,
Because my general is Doge, and will not
See his old soldier trampled on. Had any,
Save Faliero, fill'd the ducal throne,
This blood had been wash'd out in other blood.
Doge. You come to me for justice — unto *me!*
The Doge of Venice, and I cannot give it;
I cannot even obtain it — 'T was denied
To me most solemnly an hour ago.
I. Ber. How says your highness?
Doge. Steno is condemn'd
To a month's confinement.
I. Ber. What! the same who dared
To stain the ducal throne with those foul words,
That have cried shame to every ear in Venice?
Doge. Ay, doubtless they have echo'd o'er the arsenal,
Keeping due time with every hammer's clink
As a good jest to jolly artisans;
Or making chorus to the creaking oar,
In the vile tune of every galley-slave,
Who, as he sung the merry stave, exulted
He was not a shamed dotard like the Doge.
I. Ber. Is 't possible? a month's imprisonment!
No more for Steno?
Doge. You have heard the offence,
And now you know his punishment; and then
You ask redress of *me!* Go to the Forty,
Who pass'd the sentence upon Michel Steno;
They 'll do as much by Barbaro, no doubt.
I. Ber. Ah! dared I speak my feelings!
Doge. Give them breath.
Mine have no further outrage to endure.

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I. Ber. Then, in a word, it rests but on your word
To punish and avenge — I will not say
My petty wrong, for what is a mere blow,
However vile, to such a thing as I am? —
But the base insult done your state and person.
Doge. Your overrate my power, which is a pageant.
This cap is not the monarch's crown; these robes
Might move compassion, like a beggar's rags;
Nay, more, a beggar's are his own, and these
But lent to the poor puppet, who must play
Its part with all its empire in this ermine.
I. Ber. Wouldst thou be king?
Doge. Yes — of a happy people
I. Ber. Wouldst thou be sovereign lord of Venice?
Doge. Ay
If that the people shared that sovereignty,
So that nor they nor I were further slaves
To this o'ergrown aristocratic Hydra,
The poisonous heads of whose envenom'd body
Have breathed a pestilence upon us all.
I. Ber. Yet, thou wast born, and still hast lived, patrician.
Doge. In evil hour was I so born; my birth
Hath made me Doge to be insulted: but
I lived and toil'd a soldier and a servant
Of Venice and her people, not the senate;
Their good and my own honour were my guerdon.
I have fought and bled; commanded, ay, and conquered;
Have made and marr'd peace oft in embassies,
As it might chance to be our country's 'vantage;
Have traversed land and sea in constant duty,
Through almost sixty years, and still for Venice,
My fathers' and my birthplace, whose dear spires,
Rising at distance o'er the blue Lagoon,
It was reward enough for me to view
Once more; but not for any knot of men,
Nor sect, nor faction, did I bleed or sweat!
But would you know why I have done all this?
Ask of the bleeding pelican why she
Hath ripp'd her bosom? Had the bird a voice,
She 'd tell thee 't was for *all* her little ones.
I. Ber. And yet they made thee duke.
Doge. *They made* me so,
I sought it not, the flattering fetters met me
Returning from my Roman embassy,
And never having hitherto refused
Toil, charge, or duty for the state, I did not,

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At these late years, decline what was the highest
Of all in seeming, but of all most base
In what we have to do and to endure:
Bear witness for me thou, my injured subject,
When I can neither right myself nor thee.
I. Ber. You shall do both, if you possess the will;
And many thousands more not less oppress'd,
Who wait but for a signal — will you give it?
Doge. You speak in riddles.
I. Ber. Which shall soon be read
At peril of my life; if you disdain not
To lend a patient ear.
Doge. Say on.
I. Ber. Not thou,
Nor I alone, are injured and abused,
Contemn'd and trampled on; but the whole people
Groan with the strong conception of their wrongs:
The foreign soldiers in the senate's pay
Are discontented for their long arrears;
The native mariners, and civic troops,
Feel with their friends; for who is he amongst them
Whose brethren, parents, children, wives, or sisters,
Have not partook oppression, or pollution,
From the patricians? And the hopeless war
Against the Genoese, which is still maintain'd
With the plebeian blood, and treasure wrung
From their hard earnings, has inflamed them further:
Even now — but, I forget that speaking thus,
Perhaps I pass the sentence of my death!
Doge. And suffering what thou hast done — fear'st thou
Death?
Be silent then, and live on, to be beaten
By those for whom thou hast bled.
I. Ber. No, I will speak
At every hazard; and if Venice' Doge
Should turn delator, be the shame on him,
And sorrow too; for he will lose far more
Than I.
Doge. From me fear nothing; out with it!
I. Ber. Know then, that there are met and sworn in secret
A band of brethren, valiant hearts and true;
Men who have proved all fortunes, and have long
Grieved over that of Venice, and have right
To do so; having served her in all climes,
And having rescued her from foreign foes,
Would do the same from those within her walls.

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They are not numerous, nor yet too few
For their great purpose; they have arms, and means,
And hearts, and hopes, and faith, and patient courage.
Doge. For what then do you pause?
I. Ber. An hour to strike.
Doge (*aside*). Saint Mark's shall strike that hour!
I. Ber. I now have placed
My life, my honour, all my earthly hopes
Within thy power, but in the firm belief
That injuries like ours, sprung from one cause,
Will generate one vengeance: should it be so,
Be our chief now — our sovereign hereafter.
Doge. How many are ye?
I. Ber. I 'll not answer that
Till I am answer'd.
Doge. How, sir! do you menace?
I. Ber. No; I affirm. I have betray'd myself;
But there 's no torture in the mystic wells
Which undermine your palace, nor in those
Not less appalling cells, the "leaden roofs,"
To force a single name from me of others.
The Pozzi and the Piombi were in vain;
They might wring blood from me, but treachery never.
And I would pass the fearful "Bridge of Sighs,"
Joyous that mine must be the last that e'er
Would echo o'er the Stygian wave which flows
Between the murderers and the murder'd, washing
The prison and the palace walls: there are
Those who would live to think on 't, and avenge me.
Doge. If such your power and purpose, why come here
To sue for justice, being in the course
To do yourself due right?
I. Ber. Because the man,
Who claims protection from authority,
Showing his confidence and his submission
To that authority, can hardly be
Suspected of combining to destroy it.
Had I sate down too humbly with this blow,
A moody brow and mutter'd threats had made me
A mark'd man to the Forty's inquisition;
But loud complaint, however angrily
It shapes its phrase, is little to be fear'd,
And less distrusted. But, besides all this,
I had another reason.
Doge. What was that?
I. Ber. Some rumours that the Doge was greatly moved

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By the reference of the Avogadori
Of Michel Steno's sentence to the Forty
Had reach'd me. I had served you, honour'd you,
And felt that you were dangerously insulted,
Being of an order of such spirits, as
Requite tenfold both good and evil: 't was
My wish to prove and urge you to redress.
Now you know all; and that I speak the truth,
My peril be the proof.

Doge. You have deeply ventured;
But all must do so who would greatly win:
Thus far I 'll answer you — your secret 's safe.

I. Ber. And is this all?

Doge. Unless with all intrusted,
What would you have me answer?

I. Ber. I would have you
Trust him who leaves his life in trust with you.

Doge. But I must know your plan, your names, and numbers;
The last may then be doubled, and the former
Matured and strengthen'd.

I. Ber. We 're enough already;
You are the sole ally we covet now.

Doge. But bring me to the knowledge of your chiefs.

I. Ber. That shall be done upon your formal pledge
To keep the faith that we will pledge to you.

Doge. When? where?

I. Ber. This night I 'll bring to your apartment
Two of the principals; a greater number
Were hazardous.

Doge. Stay, I must think of this.
What if I were to trust myself amongst you,
And leave the palace?

I. Ber. You must come alone.

Doge. With but my nephew.

I. Ber. Not were he your son.

Doge. Wretch! darest thou name my son? He died in arms
At Sapienza for this faithless state.
Oh! that he were alive, and I in ashes!
Or that he were alive ere I be ashes!
I should not need the dubious aid of strangers.

I. Ber. Not one of all those strangers whom thou doubtest,
But will regard thee with a filial feeling,
So that thou keep'st a father's faith with them.

Doge. The die is cast. Where is the place of meeting?

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I. Ber. At midnight I will be alone and mask'd
Where'er your highness pleases to direct me,
To wait your coming, and conduct you where
You shall receive our homage, and pronounce
Upon our project.

Doge. At what hour arises
The moon?

I. Ber. Late, but the atmosphere is thick and dusky,
'T is a sirocco.

Doge. At the midnight hour, then,
Near to the church where sleep my sires; the same,
Twin-named from the apostles John and Paul;
A gondola, (1) with one oar only, will
Lurk in the narrow channel which glides by.
Be there.

I. Ber. I will not fail.

Doge. And now retire ——

I. Ber. In the full hope your highness will not falter
In your great purpose. Prince, I take my leave.
[*Exit* ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Doge (*solus*). At midnight, by the church Saints John and Paul,
Where sleep my noble fathers, I repair —
To what? to hold a council in the dark
With common ruffians leagued to ruin states!
And will not my great sires leap from the vault,
Where lie two doges who preceded me,
And pluck me down amongst them? Would they could!
For I should rest in honour with the honour'd.
Alas! I must not think of them, but those
Who have made me thus unworthy of a name
Noble and brave as aught of consular
On Roman marbles; but I will redeem it
Back to its antique lustre in our annals,
By sweet revenge on all that 's base in Venice,
And freedom to the rest, or leave it black
To all the growing calumnies of time,
Which never spare the fame of him who fails,
But try the Cæsar, or the Catiline,
By the true touchstone of desert — success.

(1) A gondola is not like a common boat, but is as easily rowed with one oar as with two (though, of course, not so swiftly), and often is so from motives of privacy; and, since the decay of Venice, of economy.

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ACT II.

SCENE I.

An Apartment in the Ducal Palace.

ANGIOLINA (*wife of the* DOGE) *and* MARIANNA.

Ang. What was the Doge's answer?
Mar. That he was
That moment summon'd to a conference;
But 't is by this time ended. I perceived
Not long ago the senators embarking;
And the last gondola may now be seen
Gliding into the throng of barks which stud
The glittering waters.
Ang. Would he were return'd!
He has been much disquieted of late;
And Time, which has not tamed his fiery spirit,
Nor yet enfeebled even his mortal frame,
Which seems to be more nourish'd by a soul
So quick and restless that it would consume
Less hardy clay — Time has but little power
On his resentments or his griefs. Unlike
To other spirits of his order, who,
In the first burst of passion, pour away
Their wrath or sorrow, all things wear in him
An aspect of eternity: his thoughts,
His feelings, passions, good or evil, all
Have nothing of old age; and his bold brow
Bears but the scars of mind, the thoughts of years,
Not their decrepitude: and he of late
Has been more agitated than his wont.
Would he were come! for I alone have power
Upon his troubled spirit.
Mar. It is true,
His highness has of late been greatly moved
By the affront of Steno, and with cause:
But the offender doubtless even now
Is doom'd to expiate his rash insult with
Such chastisement as will enforce respect
To female virtue, and to noble blood.
Ang. 'T was a gross insult; but I heed it not
For the rash scorner's falsehood in itself,
But for the effect, the deadly deep impression

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Which it has made upon Faliero's soul,
The proud, the fiery, the austere — austere
To all save me: I tremble when I think
To what it may conduct.
Mar. Assuredly
The Doge can not suspect you?
Ang. Suspect *me!*
Why Steno dared not: when he scrawl'd his lie,
Grovelling by stealth in the moon's glimmering light,
His own still conscience smote him for the act,
And every shadow on the walls frown'd shame
Upon his coward calumny.
Mar. 'T were fit
He should be punish'd grievously.
Ang. He is so.
Mar. What! is the sentence pass'd? is he condemn'd?
Ang. I know not that, but he has been detected.
Mar. And deem you this enough for such foul scorn?
Ang. I would not be a judge in my own cause,
Nor do I know what sense of punishment
May reach the soul of ribalds such as Steno;
But if his insults sink no deeper in
The minds of the inquisitors than they
Have ruffled mine, he will, for all acquittance,
Be left to his own shamelessness or shame.
Mar. Some sacrifice is due to slander'd virtue.
Ang. Why, what is virtue if it needs a victim?
Or if it must depend upon men's words?
The dying Roman said, "'t was but a name:"
It were indeed no more, if human breath
Could make or mar it.
Mar. Yet full many a dame,
Stainless and faithful, would feel all the wrong
Of such a slander; and less rigid ladies,
Such as abound in Venice, would be loud
And all-inexorable in their cry
For justice.
Ang. This but proves it is the name
And not the quality they prize: the first
Have found it a hard task to hold their honour,
If they require it to be blazon'd forth;
And those who have not kept it, seek its seeming
As they would look out for an ornament
Of which they feel the want, but not because
They think it so; they live in others' thoughts,
And would seem honest as they must seem fair.

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Mar. You have strange thoughts for a patrician dame.
Ang. And yet they were my father's; with his name,
The sole inheritance he left.
Mar. You want none;
Wife to a prince, the chief of the Republic.
Ang. I should have sought none though a peasant's bride,
But feel not less the love and gratitude
Due to my father, who bestow'd my hand
Upon his early, tried, and trusted friend,
The Count Val di Marino, now our Doge.
Mar. And with that hand did he bestow your heart?
Ang. He did so, or it had not been bestow'd.
Mar. Yet this strange disproportion in your years,
And, let me add, disparity of tempers,
Might make the world doubt whether such an union
Could make you wisely, permanently happy.
Ang. The world will think with worldlings; but my heart
Has still been in my duties, which are many,
But never difficult.
Mar. And do you love him?
Ang. I love all noble qualities which merit
Love, and I loved my father, who first taught me
To single out what we should love in others,
And to subdue all tendency to lend
The best and purest feelings of our nature
To baser passions. He bestow'd my hand
Upon Faliero: he had known him noble,
Brave, generous; rich in all the qualities
Of soldier, citizen, and friend; in all
Such have I found him as my father said.
His faults are those that dwell in the high bosoms
Of men who have commanded; too much pride
And the deep passions fiercely foster'd by
The uses of patricians, and a life
Spent in the storms of state and war; and also
From the quick sense of honour, which becomes
A duty to a certain sign, a vice
When overstrain'd, and this I fear in him.
And then he has been rash from his youth upwards,
Yet temper'd by redeeming nobleness
In such sort, that the wariest of republics
Has lavish'd all its chief employs upon him,
From his first fight to his last embassy,
From which on his return the dukedom met him.
Mar. But previous to this marriage, had your heart

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Ne'er beat for any of the noble youth,
Such as in years had been more meet to match
Beauty like yours? or since have you ne'er seen
One, who, if your fair hand were still to give,
Might now pretend to Loredano's daughter?

Ang. I answer'd your first question when I said I married.

Mar. And the second?

Ang. Needs no answer.

Mar. I pray you pardon, if I have offended.

Ang. I feel no wrath, but some surprise: I knew not
That wedded bosoms could permit themselves
To ponder upon what they *now* might choose,
Or aught save their past choice.

Mar. 'T is their past choice
That far too often makes them deem they would
Now choose more wisely, could they cancel it.

Ang. It may be so. I know not of such thoughts.

Mar. Here comes the Doge — shall I retire?

Ang. It may
Be better you should quit me; he seems rapt
In thought. — How pensively he takes his way!

[*Exit* MARIANNA.

Enter the DOGE *and* PIETRO.

Doge (*musing*). There is a certain Philip Calendaro
Now in the Arsenal, who holds command
Of eighty men, and has great influence
Besides on all the spirits of his comrades:
This man, I hear, is bold and popular,
Sudden and daring, and yet secret; 't would
Be well that he were won: I needs must hope
That Israel Bertuccio has secured him,
But fain would be ——

Pie. My lord, pray pardon me
For breaking in upon your meditation;
The Senator Bertuccio, your kinsman,
Charged me to follow and enquire your pleasure
To fix an hour when he may speak with you.

Doge. At sunset. — Stay a moment — let me see —
Say in the second hour of night. [*Exit* PIETRO.

Ang. My lord!

Doge. My dearest child, forgive me — why delay
So long approaching me? — I saw you not.

Ang. You were absorb'd in thought, and he who now

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Has parted from you might have words of weight
To bear you from the senate.
Doge. From the senate?
Ang. I would not interrupt him in his duty
And theirs.
Doge. The senate's duty! you mistake;
'Tis we who owe all service to the senate.
Ang. I thought the Duke had held command in Venice.
Doge. He shall. — But let that pass. — We will be jocund.
How fares it with you? have you been abroad?
The day is overcast, but the calm wave
Favours the gondolier's light skimming oar;
Or have you held a levee of your friends?
Or has your music made you solitary?
Say — is there aught that you would will within
The little sway now left the Duke? or aught
Of fitting splendour, or of honest pleasure,
Social or lonely, that would glad your heart,
To compensate for many a dull hour, wasted
On an old man oft moved with many cares?
Speak, and 't is done.
Ang. You 're ever kind to me.
I having nothing to desire, or to request,
Except to see you oftener and calmer.
Doge. Calmer?
Ang. Ay, calmer, my good lord. — Ah, why
Do you still keep apart, and walk alone,
And let such strong emotions stamp your brow,
As not betraying their full import, yet
Disclose too much?
Doge. Disclose too much! — of what?
What is there to disclose?
Ang. A heart so ill
At ease.
Doge. 'T is nothing, child. — But in the state
You know what daily cares oppress all those
Who govern this precarious commonwealth;
Now suffering from the Genoese without,
And malcontents within — 't is this which makes me
More pensive and less tranquil than my wont.
Ang. Yet this existed long before, and never
Till in these late days did I see you thus.
Forgive me; there is something at your heart
More than the mere discharge of public duties,
Which long use and a talent like to yours

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Have render'd light, nay, a necessity,
To keep your mind from stagnating. 'T is not
In hostile states, nor perils, thus to shake you;
You, who have stood all storms and never sunk,
And climb'd up to the pinnacle of power
And never fainted by the way, and stand
Upon it, and can look down steadily
Along the depth beneath, and ne'er feel dizzy.
Were Genoa's galleys riding in the port,
Were civil fury raging in St. Mark's,
You are not to be wrought on, but would fall,
As you have risen, with an unalter'd brow —
Your feelings now are of a different kind;
Something has stung your pride, not patriotism.

Doge. Pride! Angiolina? Alas! none is left me.

Ang. Yes — the same sin that overthrew the angels,
And of all sins most easily besets
Mortals the nearest to the angelic nature:
The vile are only vain; the great are proud.

Doge. I *had* the pride of honour, of *your* honour,
Deep at my heart —— But let us change the theme.

Ang. Ah no! — As I have ever shared your kindness
In all things else, let me not be shut out
From your distress: were it of public import,
You know I never sought, would never seek
To win a word from you; but feeling now
Your grief is private, it belongs to me
To lighten or divide it. Since the day
When foolish Steno's ribaldry detected
Unfix'd your quiet, you are greatly changed,
And I would soothe you back to what you were.

Doge. To what I was! — Have you heard Steno's sentence?

Ang. No.

Doge. A month's arrest.

Ang. Is it not enough?

Doge. Enough! — yes, for a drunken galley slave,
Who, stung by stripes, may murmur at his master;
But not for a deliberate, false, cool villain,
Who stains a lady's and a prince's honour
Even on the throne of his authority.

Ang. There seems to me enough in the conviction
Of a patrician guilty of a falsehood:
All other punishment were light unto
His loss of honour.

Doge. Such men have no honour;

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They have but their vile lives — and these are spared.
Ang. You would not have him die for this offence?
Doge. Not *now*: — being still alive, I'd have him live.
Long as *he* can; he has ceased to merit death;
The guilty saved hath damn'd his hundred judges,
And he is pure, for now his crime is theirs.
Ang. Oh! had this false and flippant libeller
Shed his young blood for his absurd lampoon,
Ne'er from that moment could this breast have known
A joyous hour, or dreamless slumber more.
Doge. Does not the law of Heaven say blood for blood?
And he who *taints* kills more than he who sheds it.
Is it the *pain* of blows, or *shame* of blows,
That make such deadly to the sense of man?
Do not the laws of man say blood for honour?
And, less than honour, for a little gold?
Say not the laws of nations blood for treason?
Is 't nothing to have fill'd these veins with poison
For their once healthful current? is it nothing
To have stain'd your name and mine — the noblest names?
Is 't nothing to have brought into contempt
A prince before his people? to have fail'd
In the respect accorded by mankind
To youth in woman, and old age in man?
To virtue in your sex, and dignity
In ours? — but let them look to it who have saved him.
Ang. Heaven bids us to forgive our enemies.
Doge. Doth Heaven forgive her own? Is Satan saved
From wrath eternal?
Ang. Do not speak thus wildly —
Heaven will alike forgive you and your foes.
Doge. Amen! May Heaven forgive them!
Ang. And will you?
Doge. Yes, when they are in Heaven!
Ang. And not till then?
Doge. What matters my forgiveness? an old man's,
Worn out, scorn'd, spurn'd, abused; what matters then
My pardon more than my resentment, both
Being weak and worthless? I have lived too long. —
But let us change the argument. — My child!
My injured wife, the child of Loredano,
The brave, the chivalrous, how little deem'd
Thy father, wedding thee unto his friend,
That he was linking thee to shame! — Alas!
Shame without sin, for thou art faultless. Hadst thou
But had a different husband, *any* husband

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In Venice save the Doge, this blight, this brand,
This blasphemy had never fallen upon thee.
So young, so beautiful, so good, so pure,
To suffer this, and yet be unavenged!
Ang. I am too well avenged, for you still love me,
And trust, and honour me; and all men know
That you are just, and I am true: what more
Could I require, or you command?
Doge. 'T is well,
And may be better; but whate'er betide,
Be thou at least kind to my memory.
Ang. Why speak you thus?
Doge. It is no matter why;
But I would still, whatever others think,
Have your respect both now and in my grave.
Ang. Why should you doubt it? has it ever fail'd?
Doge. Come hither, child; I would a word with you.
Your father was my friend; unequal fortune
Made him my debtor for some courtesies
Which bind the good more firmly: when, oppress'd
With his last malady, he will'd our union,
It was not to repay me, long repaid
Before by his great loyalty in friendship;
His object was to place your orphan beauty
In honourable safety from the perils,
Which, in this scorpion nest of vice, assail
A lonely and undower'd maid. I did not
Think with him, but would not oppose the thought
Which soothed his death-bed.
Ang. I have not forgotten
The nobleness with which you bade me speak
If my young heart held any preference
Which would have made me happier; nor your offer
To make my dowry equal to the rank
Of aught in Venice, and forego all claim
My father's last injunction gave you.
Doge. Thus,
'T was not a foolish dotard's vile caprice,
Nor the false edge of aged appetite,
Which made me covetous of girlish beauty,
And a young bride: for in my fieriest youth
I sway'd such passions; nor was this my age
Infected with that leprosy of lust
Which taints the hoariest years of vicious men,
Making them ransack to the very last
The dregs of pleasure for their vanish'd joys;

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Or buy in selfish marriage some young victim,
Too helpless to refuse a state that 's honest,
Too feeling not to know herself a wretch.
Our wedlock was not of this sort; you had
Freedom from me to choose, and urged in answer
Your father's choice.

Ang. I did so; I would do so
In face of earth and heaven; for I have never
Repented for my sake; sometimes for yours,
In pondering o'er your late disquietudes.

Doge. I knew my heart would never treat you harshly;
I knew my days could not disturb you long;
And then the daughter of my earliest friend,
His worthy daughter, free to choose again,
Wealthier and wiser, in the ripest bloom
Of womanhood, more skilful to select
By passing these probationary years
Inheriting a prince's name and riches,
Secured, by the short penance of enduring
An old man for some summers, against all
That law's chicane or envious kinsmen might
Have urged against her right; my best friend's child
Would choose more fitly in respect of years,
And not less truly in a faithful heart.

Ang. My lord, I look'd but to my father's wishes,
Hallow'd by his last words, and to my heart
For doing all its duties, and replying
With faith to him with whom I was affianced.
Ambitious hopes ne'er cross'd my dreams; and should
The hour you speak of come, it will be seen so.

Doge. I do believe you; and I know you true:
For love, romantic love, which in my youth
I knew to be illusion, and ne'er saw
Lasting, but often fatal, it had been
No lure for me, in my most passionate days,
And could not be so now, did such exist.
But such respect, and mildly paid regard
As a true feeling for your welfare, and
A free compliance with all honest wishes;
A kindness to your virtues, watchfulness
Not shown, but shadowing o'er such little failings
As youth is apt in, so as not to check
Rashly, but win you from them ere you knew
You had been won, but thought the change your choice;
A pride not in your beauty, but your conduct, —
A trust in you — a patriarchal love,

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And not a doting homage — friendship, faith —
Such estimation in your eyes as these
Might claim, I hoped for.
Ang. And have ever had.
Doge. I think so. For the difference in our years
You knew it, choosing me, and chose: I trusted
Not to my qualities, nor would have faith
In such, nor outward ornaments of nature,
Were I still in my five and twentieth spring;
I trusted to the blood of Lorendano
Pure in your veins; I trusted to the soul
God gave you — to the truths your father taught you —
To your belief in heaven — to your mild virtues —
To your own faith and honour, for my own.
Ang. You have done well. — I thank you for that trust,
Which I have never for one moment ceased
To honour you the more for.
Doge. Where is honour,
Innate and precept-strengthen'd, 't is the rock
Of faith connubial: where it is not — where
Light thoughts are lurking, or the vanities
Of worldly pleasure rankle in the heart,
Or sensual throbs convulse it, well I know
'T were hopeless for humanity to dream
Of honesty in such infected blood,
Although 't were wed to him it covets most:
An incarnation of the poet's god
In all his marble-chisell'd beauty, or
The demi-deity, Alcides, in
His majesty of superhuman manhood,
Would not suffice to bind where virtue is not;
It is consistency which forms and proves it:
Vice cannot fix, and virtue cannot change.
The once fall'n woman must for ever fall;
For vice must have variety, while virtue
Stands like the sun, and all which rolls around
Drinks life, and light, and glory from her aspect.
Ang. And seeing, feeling thus this truth in others,
(I pray you pardon me;) but wherefore yield you
To the most fierce of fatal passions, and
Disquiet your great thoughts with restless hate
Of such a thing as Steno?
Doge. You mistake me.
It is not Steno who could move me thus;
Had it been so, he should —— but let that pass.
Ang. What is 't you feel so deeply, then, even now?

Doge. The violated majesty of Venice,
At once insulted in her lord and laws.
Ang. Alas! why will you thus consider it?
Doge. I have thought on 't till —— but let me lead you back
To what I urged; all these things being noted,
I wedded you; the world then did me justice
Upon the motive, and my conduct proved
They did me right, while yours was all to praise:
You had all freedom — all respect — all trust
From me and mine; and, born of those who made
Princes at home, and swept kings from their thrones
On foreign shores, in all things you appear'd
Worthy to be our first of native dames.
Ang. To what does this conduct?
Doge. To thus much — that
A miscreant's angry breath may blast it all —
A villain, whom for his unbridled bearing,
Even in the midst of our great festival,
I caused to be conducted forth, and taught
How to demean himself in ducal chambers;
A wretch like this may leave upon the wall
The blighting venom of his sweltering heart,
And this shall spread itself in general poison;
And woman's innocence, man's honour, pass
Into a by-word; and the doubly felon
(Who first insulted virgin modesty
By a gross affront to your attendant damsels
Amidst the noblest of our dames in public)
Requite himself for his most just expulsion
By blackening publicly his sovereign's consort,
And be absolved by his upright compeers.
Ang. But he has been condemn'd into captivity.
Doge. For such as him a dungeon were acquittal;
And his brief term of mock-arrest will pass
Within a palace. But I 've done with him;
The rest must be with you.
Ang. With me, my lord?
Doge. Yes, Angiolina. Do not marvel; I
Have let this prey upon me till I feel
My life cannot be long; and fain would have you
Regard the injunctions you will find within
This scroll (*Giving her a paper*) —— Fear not; they are for your advantage:
Read them hereafter at the fitting hour.
Ang. My lord, in life, and after life, you shall

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Be honour'd still by me: but may your days
Be many yet — and happier than the present!
This passion will give way, and you will be
Serene, and what you should be — what you were.
Doge. I will be what I should be, or be nothing;
But never more — oh! never, never more,
O'er the few days or hours which yet await
The blighted old age of Faliero, shall
Sweet Quiet shed her sunset! Never more
Those summer shadows rising from the past
Of a not ill-spent nor inglorious life,
Mellowing the last hours as the night approaches,
Shall soothe me to my moment of long rest.
I had but little more to task, or hope,
Save the regards due to the blood and sweat,
And the soul's labour through which I had toil'd
To make my country honour'd. As her servant —
Her servant, though her chief — I would have gone
Down to my fathers with a name serene
And pure as theirs; but this has been denied me. —
Would I had died at Zara!
Ang. There you saved
The state; then live to save her still. A day,
Another day like that would be the best
Reproof to them, and sole revenge for you.
Doge. But one such day occurs within an age;
My life is little less than one, and 't is
Enough for Fortune to have granted *once*,
That which scarce one more favour'd citizen
May win in many states and years. But why
Thus speak I? Venice has forgot that day —
Then why should I remember it? — Farewell,
Sweet Angiolina! I must to my cabinet;
There 's much for me to do — and the hour hastens.
Ang. Remember what you were.
Doge. It were in vain!
Joy's recollection is no longer joy,
While Sorrow's memory is a sorrow still.
Ang. At least, whate'er may urge, let me implore
That you will take some little pause of rest:
Your sleep for many nights has been so turbid,
That it had been relief to have awaked you,
Had I not hoped that Nature would o'erpower
At length the thoughts which shook your slumbers thus,
An hour of rest will give you to your toils
With fitter thoughts and freshen'd strength.

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Doge. I cannot —
I must not, if I could; for never was
Such reason to be watchful: yet a few —
Yet a few days and dream-perturbed nights,
And I shall slumber well — but where? — no matter.
Adieu, my Angiolina.
Ang. Let me be
An instant — yet an instant your companion!
I cannot bear to leave you thus.
Doge. Come then,
My gentle child — forgive me; thou wert made
For better fortunes than to share in mine,
Now darkling in their close toward the deep vale
Where Death sits robed in his all-sweeping shadow.
When I am gone — it may be sooner than
Even these years warrant, for there is that stirring
Within — above — around, that in this city
Will make the cemeteries populous
As e'er they were by pestilence or war, —
When I *am* nothing, let that which I *was*
Be still sometimes a name on thy sweet lips,
A shadow in thy fancy, of a thing
Which would not have thee mourn it, but remember; —
Let us begone, my child — the time is pressing.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

A retired Spot near the Arsenal.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO *and* PHILIP CALENDARO.

Cal. How sped you, Israel, in your late complaint?
I. Ber. Why, well.
Cal. Is 't possible! will he be punish'd?
I. Ber. Yes.
Cal. With what? a mulct or an arrest?
I. Ber. With death! —
Cal. Now you rave, or must intend revenge,
Such as I counsell'd you, with your own hand.
I. Ber. Yes; and for one sole draught of hate, forego
The great redress we meditate for Venice,
And change a life of hope for one of exile;
Leaving one scorpion crush'd, and thousands stinging
My friends, my family, my countrymen!
No, Calendaro; these same drops of blood,
Shed shamefully, shall have the whole of his

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For their requital —— But not only his ;
We will not strike for private wrongs alone :
Such are for selfish passions and rash men,
But are unworthy a tyrannicide.
Cal. You have more patience than I care to boast.
Had I been present when you bore this insult,
I must have slain him, or expired myself
In the vain effort to repress my wrath.
I. Ber. Thank Heaven, you were not — all had else been marr'd :
As 't is, our cause looks prosperous still.
Cal. You saw
The Doge — what answer gave he ?
I. Ber. That there was
No punishment for such as Barbaro.
Cal. I told you so before, and that 't was idle
To think of justice from such hands.
I. Ber. At least,
It lull'd suspicion, showing confidence.
Had I been silent, not a sbirro but
Had kept me in his eye, as meditating
A silent, solitary, deep revenge.
Cal. But wherefore not address you to the Council ?
The Doge is a mere puppet, who can scarce
Obtain right for himself. Why speak to him ?
I. Ber. You shall know that hereafter.
Cal. Why not now ?
I. Ber. Be patient but till midnight. Get your musters,
And bid our friends prepare their companies : —
Set all in readiness to strike the blow,
Perhaps in a few hours ; we have long waited
For a fit time — that hour is on the dial,
It may be, of to-morrow's sun : delay
Beyond may breed us double danger. See
That all be punctual at our place of meeting,
And arm'd, excepting those of the Sixteen,
Who will remain among the troops to wait
The signal.
Cal. These brave words have breathed new life
Into my veins ; I am sick of these protracted
And hesitating councils : day on day
Crawl'd on, and added but another link
To our long fetters, and some fresher wrong
Inflicted on our brethren or ourselves,
Helping to swell our tyrants' bloated strength.
Let us but deal upon them, and I care not

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For the result, which must be death or freedom!
I 'm weary to the heart of finding neither.
I. Ber. We will be free in life or death! the grave
Is chainless. Have you all the musters ready?
And are the sixteen companies completed
To sixty?
Cal. All save two, in which there are
Twenty-five wanting to make up the number.
I. Ber. No matter; we can do without. Whose are they?
Cal. Bertram's and old Soranzo's, both of whom
Appear less forward in the cause than we are.
I. Ber. Your fiery nature makes you deem all those
Who are not restless cold: but there exists
Oft in concentred spirits not less daring
Than in more loud avengers. Do not doubt them.
Cal. I do not doubt the elder; but in Bertram
There is a hesitating softness, fatal
To enterprise like ours: I 've seen that man
Weeping like an infant o'er the misery
Of others, heedless of his own, though greater;
And in a recent quarrel I beheld him
Turn sick at sight of blood, although a villain's.
I. Ber. The truly brave are soft of heart and eyes,
And feel for what their duty bids them do.
I have known Bertram long; there doth not breathe
A soul more full of honour.
Cal. It may be so:
I apprehend less treachery than weakness;
Yet as he has no mistress, and no wife
To work upon his milkiness of spirit,
He may go through the ordeal; it is well
He is an orphan, friendless save in us:
A woman or a child had made him less
Than either in resolve.
I. Ber. Such ties are not
For those who are call'd to the high destinies
Which purify corrupted commonwealths;
We must forget all feelings save the *one* —
We must resign all passions save our purpose —
We must behold no object save our country —
And only look on death as beautiful,
So that the sacrifice ascend to heaven,
And draw down freedom on her evermore.
Cal. But if we fail ——
I. Ber. They never fail who die
In a great cause: the block may soak their gore;

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Their heads may sodden in the sun; their limbs
Be strung to city gates and castle walls —
But still their spirit walks abroad. Though years
Elapse, and others share as dark a doom,
They but augment the deep and sweeping thoughts
Which overpower all others, and conduct
The world at last to freedom: What were we,
If Brutus had not lived? He died in giving
Rome liberty, but left a deathless lesson —
A name which is a virtue, and a soul
Which multiplies itself throughout all time
When wicked men wax mighty, and a state
Turns servile: he and his high friend were styled
"The last of Romans!" Let us be the first
Of true Venetians, sprung from Roman sires.

Cal. Our fathers did not fly from Attila
Into these isles, where palaces have sprung
On banks redeem'd from the rude ocean's ooze,
To own a thousand despots in his place.
Better bow down before the Hun, and call
A Tartar lord, than these swoln silkworms masters!
The first at least was man, and used his sword
As sceptre: these unmanly creeping things
Command our swords, and rule us with a word
As with a spell.

I. Ber. It shall be broken soon.
You say that all things are in readiness;
To-day I have not been the usual round,
And why thou knowest; but thy vigilance
Will better have supplied my care: these orders
In recent council to redouble now
Our efforts to repair the galleys, have
Lent a fair colour to the introduction
Of many of our cause into the arsenal,
As new artificers for their equipment,
Or fresh recruits obtain'd in haste to man
The hoped-for fleet. — Are all supplied with arms?

Cal. All who were deem'd trust-worthy: there are some
Whom it were well to keep in ignorance
Till it be time to strike, and then supply them:
When in the heat and hurry of the hour
They have no opportunity to pause,
But needs must on with those who will surround them.

I. Ber. You have said well. Have you remark'd all such?

Cal. I 've noted most; and caused the other chiefs
To use like caution in their companies.

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As far as I have seen, we are enough
To make the enterprise secure, if 't is
Commenced to-morrow; but, till 't is begun,
Each hour is pregnant with a thousand perils.
I. Ber. Let the Sixteen meet at the wonted hour,
Except Soranzo, Nicoletto Blondo,
And Marco Giuda, who will keep their watch
Within the arsenal, and hold all ready,
Expectant of the signal we will fix on.
Cal. We will not fail.
I. Ber. Let all the rest be there;
I have a stranger to present to them.
Cal. A stranger! doth he know the secret?
I. Ber. Yes.
Cal. And have you dared to peril your friends' lives
On a rash confidence in one we know not?
I. Ber. I have risk'd no man's life except my own—
Of that be certain: he is one who may
Make our assurance doubly sure, according
His aid; and if reluctant, he no less
Is in our power: he comes alone with me,
And cannot 'scape us; but he will not swerve.
Cal. I cannot judge of this until I know him:
Is he one of our order?
I. Ber. Ay, in spirit,
Although a child of greatness; he is one
Who would become a throne, or overthrow one—
One who has done great deeds, and seen great changes,
No tyrant, though bred up to tyranny;
Valiant in war, and sage in council; noble
In nature, although haughty; quick, yet wary:
Yet for all this, so full of certain passions,
That if once stirr'd and baffled, as he has been
Upon the tenderest points, there is no Fury
In Grecian story like to that which wrings
His vitals with her burning hands, till he
Grows capable of all things for revenge;
And add too, that his mind is liberal,
He sees and feels the people are oppress'd,
And shares their sufferings. Take him all in all,
We have need of such, and such have need of us.
Cal. And what part would you have him take with us?
I. Ber. It may be, that of chief.
Cal. What! and resign
Your own command as leader?
I. Ber. Even so.

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My object is to make your cause end well,
And not to push myself to power. Experience,
Some skill, and your own choice, had mark'd me out
To act in trust as your commander, till
Some worthier should appear: if I have found such
As you yourselves shall own more worthy, think you
That I would hesitate from selfishness,
And, covetous of brief authority,
Stake our deep interest on my single thoughts,
Rather than yield to one above me in
All leading qualities? No, Calendaro,
Know your friend better; but you all shall judge. —
Away! and let us meet at the fix'd hour.
Be vigilant, and all will yet go well.

Cal. Worthy Bertuccio, I have known you ever
Trusty and brave, with head and heart to plan
What I have still been prompt to execute.
For my own part, I seek no other chief;
What the rest will decide I know not, but
I am with YOU, as I have ever been,
In all our undertakings. Now farewell,
Until the hour of midnight sees us meet. [*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.

Scene, the Space between the Canal and the Church of San Giovanni e San Paolo. An equestrian Statue before it. — A Gondola lies in the Canal at some distance.

Enter the DOGE *alone, disguised.*

Doge (*solus*). I am before the hour, the hour whose voice,
Pealing into the arch of night, might strike
These palaces with ominous tottering,
And rock their marbles to the corner-stone,
Waking the sleepers from some hideous dream
Of indistinct but awful augury
Of that which will befall them. Yes, proud city!

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Thou must be cleansed of the black blood which makes thee
A lazar-house of tyranny: the task
Is forced upon me, I have sought it not;
And therefore was I punish'd, seeing this
Patrician pestilence spread on and on,
Until at length it smote me in my slumbers,
And I am tainted, and must wash away
The plague-spots in the healing wave. Tall fane!
Where sleep my fathers, whose dim statues shadow
The floor which doth divide us from the dead,
Where all the pregnant hearts of our bold blood,
Moulder'd into a mite of ashes, hold
In one shrunk heap, what once made many heroes,
When what is now a handful shook the earth —
Fane of the tutelar saints who guard our house!
Vault where two Doges rest — my sires! who died
The one of toil, the other in the field,
With a long race of other lineal chiefs
And sages, whose great labours, wounds, and state
I have inherited, — let the graves gape,
Till all thine aisles be peopled with the dead,
And pour them from thy portals to gaze on me!
I call them up, and them and thee to witness
What it hath been which put me to this task —
Their pure high blood, their blazon-roll of glories,
Their mighty name dishonour'd all *in* me,
Not *by* me, but by the ungrateful nobles
We fought to make our equals, not our lords: —
And chiefly thou, Ordelafo the brave,
Who perish'd in the field, where I since conquer'd,
Battling at Zara, did the hecatombs
Of thine and Venice' foes, there offer'd up
By thy descendant, merit such acquittance?
Spirits! smile down upon me; for my cause
Is yours, in all life now can be of yours, —
Your fame, your name, all mingled up in mine,
And in the future fortunes of our race!
Let me but prosper, and I make this city
Free and immortal, and our house's name
Worthier of what you were, now and hereafter!

Enter ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

I. Ber. Who goes there?
Doge. A friend to Venice.

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I. Ber. 'T is he.
Welcome, my lord, — you are before the time.
Doge. I am ready to proceed to your assembly.
I. Ber. Have with you. — I am proud and pleased to see
Such confident alacrity. Your doubts
Since our last meeting, then, are all dispell'd?
Doge. Not so — but I have set my little left
Of life upon this cast: the die was thrown
When I first listen'd to your treason — Start not!
That is the word; I cannot shape my tongue
To syllable black deeds into smooth names,
Though I be wrought on to commit them. When
I heard you tempt your sovereign, and forbore
To have you dragg'd to prison, I became
Your guiltiest accomplice: now you may,
If it so please you, do as much by me.
I. Ber. Strange words, my lord, and most unmerited;
I am no spy, and neither are we traitors.
Doge. *We* — *We!* — no matter — you have earn'd the right
To talk of *us.* — But to the point. — If this
Attempt succeeds, and Venice, render'd free
And flourishing, when we are in our graves,
Conducts her generations to our tombs
And makes her children with their little hands
Strew flowers o'er her deliverers' ashes, then
The consequence will sanctify the deed,
And we shall be like the two Bruti in
The annals of hereafter; but if not,
If we should fail, employing bloody means
And secret plot, although to a good end,
Still we are traitors, honest Israel; — thou
No less than he who was thy sovereign
Six hours ago, and now thy brother rebel.
I. Ber. 'T is not the moment to concider thus,
Else I could answer. — Let us to the meeting,
Or we may be observed in lingering here.
Doge. We *are* observed, and have been.
I. Ber. We observed!
Let me discover — and this steel ——
Doge. Put up;
Here are no human witnesses: look there —
What see you?
I. Ber. Only a tall warrior's statue
Bestriding a proud steed, in the dim light
Of the dull moon.

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Doge. That warrior was the sire
Of my sire's fathers, and that statue was
Decreed to him by the twice rescued city: —
Think you that he looks down on us or no?

I. Ber. My lord, these are mere fantasies; there are
No eyes in marble.

Doge. But there are in Death.
I tell thee, man, there is a spirit in
Such things that acts and sees, unseen, though felt;
And, if there be a spell to stir the dead,
'T is in such deeds as we are now upon.
Deem'st thou the souls of such a race as mine
Can rest, when he, their last descendant chief,
Stands plotting on the brink of their pure graves
With stung plebeians?

I. Ber. It had been as well
To have ponder'd this before, — ere you embark'd
In our great enterprise. — Do you repent?

Doge. No — but I *feel*, and shall do to the last.
I cannot quench a glorious life at once,
Nor dwindle to the thing I now must be,
And take men's lives by stealth, without some pause:
Yet doubt me not; it is this very feeling,
And knowing *what* has wrung me to be thus,
Which is your best security. There 's not
A roused mechanic in your busy plot
So wrong'd as I, so fall'n, so loudly call'd
To his redress: the very means I am forced
By these fell tyrants to adopt is such,
That I abhor them doubly for the deeds
Which I must do to pay them back for theirs.

I. Ber. Let us away — hark — the hour strikes.

Doge. On — on —
It is our knell, or that of Venice — On.

I. Ber. Say rather, 't is her freedom's rising peal
Of triumph —— This way — we are near the place.

[*Exeunt.*

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SCENE II.

The House where the Conspirators meet.

DAGOLINO, DORO, BERTRAM, FEDELE TREVISANO, CALENDARO, ANTONIO DELLE BENDE, &c. &c.

Cal. (*entering*). Are all here?
Dag. All with you; except the three
On duty, and our leader Israel,
Who is expected momently.
Cal. Where 's Bertram?
Ber. Here!
Cal. Have you not been able to complete
The number wanting in your company?
Ber. I had mark'd out some: but I have not dared
To trust them with the secret, till assured
That they were worthy faith.
Cal. There is no need
Of trusting to their faith: *who*, save ourselves
And our more chosen comrades, is aware
Fully of our intent? they think themselves
Engaged in secret to the Signory, (1)
To punish some more dissolute young nobles
Who have defied the law in their excesses;
But once drawn up, and their new swords well-flesh'd
In the rank hearts of the more odious senators,
They will not hesitate to follow up
Their blow upon the others, when they see
The example of their chiefs, and I for one
Will set them such, that they for very shame
And safety will not pause till all have perish'd.
Ber. How say you? *all!*
Cal. Whom wouldst thou spare?
Ber. *I spare*
I have no power to spare. I only question'd,
Thinking that even amongst these wicked men
There might be some, whose age and qualities
Might mark them out for pity.
Cal. Yes, such pity
As when the viper hath been cut to pieces,
The separate fragments quivering in the sun,

(1) An historical fact. See APPENDIX, Note (A).

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In the last energy of venomous life,
Deserve and have. Why, I should think as soon
Of pitying some particular fang which made
One in the jaw of the swoln serpent, as
Of saving one of these: they form but links
Of one long chain; one mass, one breath, one body;
They eat, and drink, and live, and breed together,
Revel, and lie, oppress, and kill in concert,—
So let them die as *one!*

Dag. Should *one* survive,
He would be dangerous as the whole; it is not
Their number, be it tens or thousands, but
The spirit of this aristocracy
Which must be rooted out; and if there were
A single shoot of the old tree in life,
'T would fasten in the soil, and spring again
To gloomy verdure and to bitter fruit.
Bertram, we must be firm!

Cal. Look to it well,
Bertram; I have an eye upon thee.

Ber. Who
Distrusts me?

Cal. Not I; for if I did so,
Thou wouldst not now be there to talk of trust:
It is thy softness, not thy want of faith,
Which makes thee to be doubted.

Ber. You should know
Who hear me, who and what I am; a man
Roused like yourselves to overthrow oppression;
A kind man, I am apt to think, as some
Of you have found me; and if brave or no,
You, Calendaro, can pronounce, who have seen me
Put to the proof; or, if you should have doubts,
I 'll clear them on your person!

Cal. You are welcome,
When once our enterprise is o'er, which must not
Be interrupted by a private brawl.

Ber. I am no brawler; but can bear myself
As far among the foe as any he
Who hears me; else why have I been selected
To be of your chief comrades? but no less
I own my natural weakness; I have not
Yet learn'd to think of indiscriminate murder
Without some sense of shuddering; and the sight
Of blood which spouts through hoary scalps is not
To me a thing of triumph, nor the death

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Of man surprised a glory. Well — too well
I know that we must do such things on those
Whose acts have raised up such avengers; but
If there were some of these who could be saved
From out this sweeping fate, for our own sakes
And for our honour, to take off some stain
Of massacre, which else pollutes it wholly,
I had been glad; and see no cause in this
For sneer, nor for suspicion!

Dag. Calm thee, Bertram;
For we suspect thee not, and take good heart.
It is the cause, and not our will, which asks
Such actions from our hands: we 'll wash away
All stains in Freedom's fountain!

Enter ISRAEL BERTUCCIO, *and the* DOGE, *disguised.*

Dag. Welcome, Israel.

Consp. Most welcome. — Brave Bertuccio, thou art late —
Who is this stranger?

Cal. It is time to name him.
Our comrades are even now prepared to greet him
In brotherhood, as I have made it known
That thou wouldst add a brother to our cause,
Approved by thee, and thus approved by all,
Such is our trust in all thine actions. Now
Let him unfold himself.

I. Ber. Stranger, step forth!

[*The* DOGE *discovers himself.*

Consp. To arms! — we are betray'd — it is the Doge!
Down with them both! our traitorous captain, and
The tyrant he hath sold us to.

Cal. (*drawing his sword*). Hold! Hold!
Who moves a step against them dies. Hold! hear
Bertuccio — What! are you appall'd to see
A lone, unguarded, weaponless old man
Amongst you? — Israel, speak! what means this mystery?

I. Ber. Let them advance and strike at their own bosoms,
Ungrateful suicides! for on our lives
Depend their own, their fortunes, and their hopes.

Doge. Strike! — If I dreaded death, a death more fearful
Than any your rash weapons can inflict,
I should not now be here: — Oh, noble Courage
The eldest born of Fear, which makes you brave

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Against this solitary hoary head!
See the bold chiefs, who would reform a state
And shake down senates, mad with wrath and dread
At sight of one patrician! — Butcher me,
You can; I care not. — Israel, are these men
The mighty hearts you spoke of? look upon them!
Cal. Faith! he hath shamed us, and deservedly.
Was this your trust in your true Chief Bertuccio,
To turn your swords against him and his guest?
Sheathe them, and hear him.
I. Ber. I disdain to speak.
They might and must have known a heart like mine
Incapable of treachery; and the power
They gave me to adopt all fitting means
To further their design was ne'er abused.
They might be certain that whoe'er was brought
By me into this council had been led
To take his choice — as brother, or as victim.
Doge. And which am I to be? your actions leave
Some cause to doubt the freedom of the choice.
I. Ber. My lord, we would have perish'd here together,
Had these rash men proceeded; but, behold,
They are ashamed of that mad moment's impulse,
And droop their heads; believe me, they are such
As I described them — Speak to them.
Cal. Ay, speak;
We are all listening in wonder.
I. Ber. (*addressing the Conspirators*). You are safe,
Nay, more, almost triumphant — listen then,
And know my words for truth.
Doge. You see me here,
As one of you hath said, an old, unarm'd,
Defenceless man; and yesterday you saw me
Presiding in the hall of ducal state,
Apparent sovereign of our hundred isles,
Robed in official purple, dealing out
The edicts of a power which is not mine,
Nor yours, but of our masters — the patricians.
Why I was there you know, or think you know;
Why I am *here*, he who hath been most wrong'd,
He who among you hath been most insulted,
Outraged and trodden on, until he doubt
If he be worm or no, may answer for me,
Asking of his own heart what brought him here?
You know my recent story, all men know it,
And judge of it far differently from those

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Who sate in judgment to heap scorn on scorn.
But spare me the recital — it is here,
Here at my heart the outrage — but my words,
Already spent in unavailing plaints,
Would only show my feebleness the more,
And I come here to strengthen even the strong,
And urge them on to deeds, and not to war
With woman's weapons; but I need not urge you.
Our private wrongs have sprung from public vices
In this — I cannot call it commonwealth
Nor kingdom, which hath neither prince nor people,
But all the sins of the old Spartan state
Without its virtues — temperance and valour.
The lords of Lacedæmon were true soldiers,
But ours are Sybarites, while we are Helots,
Of whom I am the lowest, most enslaved;
Although dress'd out to head a pageant, as
The Greeks of yore made drunk their slaves to form
A pastime for their children. You are met
To overthrow this monster of a state,
This mockery of a government, this spectre,
Which must be exorcised with blood, — and then
We will renew the times of truth and justice,
Condensing in a fair free commonwealth
Not rash equality but equal rights,
Proportion'd like the columns to the temple,
Giving and taking strength reciprocal,
And making firm the whole with grace and beauty,
So that no part could be removed without
Infringement of the general symmetry.
In operating this great change, I claim
To be one of you — if you trust in me;
If not, strike home, — my life is compromised,
And I would rather fall by freemen's hands
Than live another day to act the tyrant
As delegate of tyrants: such I am not,
And never have been — read it in our annals;
I can appeal to my past government
In many lands and cities; they can tell you
If I were an oppressor, or a man
Feeling and thinking for my fellow men.
Haply had I been what the senate sought,
A thing of robes and trinkets, dizen'd out
To sit in state as for a sovereign's picture;
A popular scourge, a ready sentence-signer,
A stickler for the Senate and "the Forty,"

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A sceptic of all measures which had not
The sanction of "the Ten," a council-fawner,
A tool, a fool, a puppet, — they had ne'er
Foster'd the wretch who stung me. What I suffer
Has reach'd me through my pity for the people;
That many know, and they who know not yet
Will one day learn: meantime I do devote,
Whate'er the issue, my last days of life —
My present power such as it is, not that
Of Doge, but of a man who has been great
Before he was degraded to a Doge,
And still has individual means and mind;
I stake my fame (and I had fame) — my breath —
(The least of all, for its last hours are nigh)
My heart — my hope — my soul — upon this cast!
Such as I am, I offer me to you
And to your chiefs, accept me or reject me,
A Prince who fain would be a citizen
Or nothing, and who has left his throne to be so.

Cal. Long live Faliero! — Venice shall be free!

Consp. Long live Faliero!

I. Ber. Comrades! did I well?
Is not this man a host in such a cause?

Doge. This is no time for eulogies, nor place
For exultation. Am I one of you?

Cal. Ay, and the first amongst us, as thou hast been
Of Venice — be our general and chief.

Doge. Chief! — general! — I was general at Zara,
And chief in Rhodes and Cyprus, prince in Venice:
I cannot stoop —— that is, I am not fit
To lead a band of —— patriots: when I lay
Aside the dignities which I have borne,
'T is not to put on others, but to be
Mate to my fellows — but now to the point:
Israel has stated to me your whole plan —
'T is bold, but feasible if I assist it,
And must be set in motion instantly.

Cal. E'en when thou wilt. Is it not so, my friends?
I have disposed all for a sudden blow;
When should it be then?

Doge. At sunrise.

Ber. So soon?

Doge. So soon? — so late — each hour accumulates
Peril on peril, and the more so now
Since I have mingled with you; — know you not
The Council, and "the Ten?" the spies, the eyes

Of the patricians dubious of their slaves,
And now more dubious of the prince they had made one?
I tell you, you must strike, and suddenly,
Full to the Hydra's heart — its heads will follow.
Cal. With all my soul and sword, I yield assent;
Our companies are ready, sixty each,
And all now under arms by Israel's order;
Each at their different place of rendezvous,
And vigilant, expectant of some blow;
Let each repair for action to his post!
And now, my lord, the signal?
Doge. When you hear
The great bell of Saint Mark's, which may not be
Struck without special order of the Doge
(The last poor privilege they leave their prince),
March on Saint Mark's!
I. Ber. And there? —
Doge. By different routes
Let your march be directed, every sixty
Entering a separate avenue, and still
Upon the way let your cry be of war
And of the Genoese fleet, by the first dawn
Discern'd before the port; form round the palace,
Within whose court will be drawn out in arms
My nephew and the clients of our house,
Many and martial; while the bell tolls on,
Shout ye, "Saint Mark! — the foe is on our waters!"
Cal. I see it now — but on, my noble lord.
Doge. All the patricians flocking to the Council,
(Which they dare not refuse, at the dread signal
Pealing from out their patron saint's proud tower,)
Will then be gather'd in unto the harvest,
And we will reap them with the sword for sickle.
If some few should be tardy or absent them,
'T will be but to be taken faint and single
When the majority are put to rest.
Cal. Would that the hour were come! we will not scotch,
But kill.
Ber. Once more, sir, with your pardon, I
Would now repeat the question which I ask'd
Before Bertuccio added to our cause
This great ally who renders it more sure,
And therefore safer, and as such admits
Some dawn of mercy to a portion of
Our victims — must all perish in this slaughter?
Cal. All who encounter me and mine, be sure.

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The mercy they have shown, I show.
Conap. All! all!
Is this a time to talk of pity? when
Have they e'er shown, or felt, or feign'd it?
I. Ber. Bertram,
This false compassion is a folly, and
Injustice to thy comrades and thy cause
Dost thou not see, that if we single out
Some for escape, they live but to avenge
The fallen? and how distinguish now the innocent
From out the guilty? all their acts are *one* —
A single emanation from one body,
Together knit for our oppression! 'T is
Much that we let their children live; I doubt
If all of these even should be set apart:
The hunter may reserve some single cub
From out the tiger's litter, but who e'er
Would seek to save the spotted sire or dam,
Unless to perish by their fangs? however,
I will abide by Doge Faliero's counsel:
Let him decide if any should be saved.
Doge. Ask me not — tempt me not with such a question —
Decide yourselves.
I. Ber. You know their private virtues
Far better than we can, to whom alone
Their public vices, and most foul oppression,
Have made them deadly; if there be amongst them
One who deserves to be repeal'd, pronounce.
Doge. Dolfino's father was my friend, and Lando
Fought by my side, and Marc Cornaro shared
My Genoese embassy: I saved the life
Of Veniero — shall I save it twice?
Would that I could save them and Venice also!
All these men, or their fathers, were my friends
Till they became my subjects; then fell from me
As faithless leaves drop from the o'erblown flower,
And left me a lone blighted thorny stalk,
Which, in its solitude, can shelter nothing;
So, as they let me wither, let them perish!
Cal. They cannot co-exist with Venice' freedom!
Doge. Ye, though you know and feel our mutual mass
Of many wrongs, even ye are ignorant
What fatal poison to the springs of life,
To human ties, and all that 's good and dear,
Lurks in the present institutes of Venice:

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All these men were my friends; I loved them, they
Requited honourably my regards;
We served and fought; we smiled and wept in concert;
We revell'd or we sorrow'd side by side;
We made alliances of blood and marriage;
We grew in years and honours fairly, — till
Their own desire, not my ambition, made
Them choose me for their prince, and then farewell!
Farewell all social memory! all thoughts
In common! and sweet bonds which link old friendships,
When the survivors of long years and actions,
Which now belong to history, soothe the days
Which yet remain by treasuring each other,
And never meet, but each beholds the mirror
Of half a century on his brother's brow,
And sees a hundred beings, now in earth,
Flit round them whispering of the days gone by,
And seeming not all dead, as long as two
Of the brave, joyous, reckless, glorious band,
Which once were one and many, still retain
A breath to sigh for them, a tongue to speak
Of deeds that else were silent, save on marble ——
Oime! Oime! — and must I do this deed?

I. Ber. My lord, you are much moved: it is not now
That such things must be dwelt upon.

Doge. Your patience
A moment — I recede not: mark with me
The gloomy vices of this government.
From the hour that made me Doge, the *Doge* THEY *made* me —
Farewell the past! I died to all that had been,
Or rather they to me: no friends, no kindness,
No privacy of life — all were cut off:
They came not near me, such approach gave umbrage;
They could not love me, such was not the law;
They thwarted me, 't was the state's policy;
They baffled me, 't was a patrician's duty;
They wrong'd me, for such was to right the state;
They could not right me, that would give suspicion;
So that I was a slave to my own subjects;
So that I was a foe to my own friends;
Begirt with spies for guards — with robes for power —
With pomp for freedom — gaolers for a council —
Inquisitors for friends — and hell for life!
I had one only fount of quiet left,
And *that* they poison'd! My pure household gods

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Were shiver'd on my hearth, and o'er their shrine
Sate grinning Ribaldry and sneering Scorn.
I. Ber. You have been deeply wrong'd, and now shall be
Nobly avenged before another night.
Doge. I had borne all — it hurt me, but I bore it —
Till this last running over of the cup
Of bitterness — until this last loud insult,
Not only unredress'd, but sanction'd; then,
And thus, I cast all further feelings from me —
The feelings which they crush'd for me, long, long
Before, even in their oath of false allegiance!
Even in that very hour and vow, they abjured
Their friend and made a sovereign, as boys make
Playthings, to do their pleasure — and be broken!
I from that hour have seen but senators
In dark suspicious conflict with the Doge,
Brooding with him in mutual hate and fear;
They dreading he should snatch the tyranny
From out their grasp, and he abhorring tyrants.
To me, then, these men have no *private* life,
Nor claim to ties they have cut off from others;
As senators for arbitrary acts
Let them be dealt upon.
Cal. And now to action!
Hence brethren, to our posts, and may this be
Amenable, I look on them—as such
The last night of mere words: I'd fain be doing!
Saint Mark's great bell at dawn shall find me wakeful!
I. Ber. Disperse then to your posts: be firm and vigilant;
Think on the wrongs we bear, the rights we claim.
This day and night shall be the last of peril!
Watch for the signal, and then march. I go
To join my band; let each be prompt to marshal
His separate charge: the Doge will now return
To the palace to prepare all for the blow.
We part to meet in freedom and in glory!
Cal. Doge, when I greet you next, my homage to you
Shall be the head of Steno on this sword!
Doge. No; let him be reserved unto the last,
Nor turn aside to strike at such a prey,
Till nobler game is quarried: his offence
Was a mere ebullition of the vice,
The general corruption generated
By the foul aristocracy; he could not —
He dared not in more honourable days
Have risk'd it. I have merged all private wrath

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Against him in the thought of our great purpose.
A slave insults me — I require his punishment
From his proud master's hands; if he refuse it,
The offence grows his, and let him answer it.
Cal. Yet, as the immediate cause of the alliance
Which consecrates our undertaking more,
I owe him such deep gratitude, that fain
I would repay him as he merits; may I?
Doge. You would but lop the hand, and I the head;
You would but smite the scholar, I the master;
You would but punish Steno, I the senate.
I cannot pause on individual hate,
In the absorbing, sweeping, whole revenge,
Which, like the sheeted fire from heaven, must blast
Without distinction, as it fell of yore,
Where the Dead Sea hath quench'd two cities' ashes.
I. Ber. Away, then, to your posts! I but remain
A moment to accompany the Doge
To our late place of tryst, to see no spies
Have been upon the scout, and thence I hasten
To where my allotted band is under arms.
Cal. Farewell, then, until dawn!
I. Ber. Success go with you!
Consp. We will not fail — away! My lord, farewell!
[*The Conspirators salute the* DOGE *and* ISRAEL BERTUCCIO, *and retire, headed by* PHILIP CALENDARO. *The* DOGE *and* ISRAEL BERTUCCIO *remain.*
I. Ber. We have them in the toil — it cannot fail!
Now thou 'rt indeed a sovereign, and wilt make
A name immortal greater than the greatest:
Free citizens have struck at kings ere now;
Cæsars have fallen, and even patrician hands
Have crush'd dictators, as the popular steel
Has reach'd patricians; but, until this hour,
What prince has plotted for his people's freedom?
Or risk'd a life to liberate his subjects?
For ever, and for ever, they conspire
Against the people, to abuse their hands
To chains, but laid aside to carry weapons
Against the fellow nations, so that yoke
On yoke, and slavery and death may whet,
Not glut, the never-gorged Leviathan!
Now, my lord, to our enterprise; — 't is great,
And greater the reward; why stand you rapt?
A moment back, and you were all impatience!
Doge. And is it then decided! must they die?

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I. Ber. Who?
Doge. My own friends by blood and courtesy,
And many deeds and days — the senators?
I. Ber. You pass'd their sentence, and it is a just one.
Doge. Ay, so it seems, and so it is to *you*;
You are a patriot, plebeian Gracchus —
The rebel's oracle, the people's tribune —
I blame you not—you act in your vocation;
They smote you, and oppress'd you, and despised you;
So they have *me*: but *you* ne'er spake with them;
You never broke their bread, nor shared their salt;
You never had their wine-cup at your lips;
You grew not up with them, nor laugh'd, nor wept,
Nor held a revel in their company;
Ne'er smiled to see them smile, nor claim'd their smile
In social interchange for yours, nor trusted
Nor wore them in your heart of hearts, as I have:
These hairs of mine are gray, and so are theirs,
The elders of the council: I remember
When all our locks were like the raven's wing,
As we went forth to take our prey around
The isles wrung from the false Mahometan;
And can I see them dabbled o'er with blood?
Each stab to them will seem my suicide.
I. Ber. Doge! Doge! this vacillation is unworthy
A child; if you are not in second childhood,
Call back your nerves to your own purpose, nor
Thus shame yourself and me. By heavens! I'd rather
Forego even now, or fail in our intent,
Than see the man I venerate subside
From high resolves into such shallow weakness!
You have seen blood in battle, shed it, both
Your own and that of others; can you shrink then
From a few drops from veins of hoary vampires,
Who but give back what they have drain'd from millions?
Doge. Bear with me! Step by step, and blow on blow,
I will divide with you; think not I waver:
Ah! no; it is the *certainty* of all.
Which I must do doth make me tremble thus.
But let these last and lingering thoughts have way
To which you only and the Night are conscious,
And both regardless; when the hour arrives,
'Tis time to sound the knell, and strike the blow,
Which shall unpeople many palaces,
And hew the highest genealogic trees
Down to the earth, strew'd with their bleeding fruit,

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And crush their blossoms into barrenness:
This will I — must I — have I sworn to do,
Nor aught can turn me from my destiny;
But still I quiver to behold what I
Must be, and think what I have been! Bear with me.
I. Ber. Re-man your breast; I feel no such remorse,
I understand it not: why should you change?
You acted, and you act, on your free will.
Doge. Ay, there it is — *you* feel not, nor do I,
Else I should stab thee on the spot, to save
A thousand lives, and, killing, do no murder;
You *feel* not — *you* go to this butcher-work
As if these high-born men were steers for shambles!
When all is over, you'll be free and merry,
And calmly wash those hands incarnadine;
But I, outgoing thee and all thy fellows
In this surpassing massacre, shall be,
Shall see and feel — oh God! oh God! 't is true,
And thou dost well to answer that it was
"My own free will and act," and yet you err,
For I *will* do this! Doubt not — fear not; I
Will be your most unmerciful accomplice!
And yet I act no more on my free will,
Nor my own feelings — both compel me back;
But there is *hell* within me and around,
And like the demon who believes and trembles
Must I abhor and do. Away! away!
Get thee unto thy fellows, I will hie me
To gather the retainers of our house.
Doubt not, Saint Mark's great bell shall wake all Venice,
Except her slaughter'd senate: ere the sun
Be broad upon the Adriatic there
Shall be a voice of weeping, which shall drown
The roar of waters in the cry of blood!
I am resolved — come on.
I. Ber. With all my soul!
Keep a firm rein upon these bursts of passion;
Remember what these men have dealt to thee,
And that this sacrifice will be succeeded
By ages of prosperity and freedom
To this unshackled city: a true tyrant
Would have depopulated empires, nor
Have felt the strange compunction which hath wrung you
To punish a few traitors to the people.
Trust me, such were a pity more misplaced
Than the late mercy of the state to Steno.

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Doge. Man, thou hast struck upon the chord which jars
All nature from my heart. Hence to our task!
[*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.

Palazzo of the Patrician LIONI. LIONI *laying aside mask and cloak which the Venetian Nobles wore in public, attended by a Domestic.*

Lioni. I will to rest, right weary of this revel,
The gayest we have held for many moons,
And yet, I know not why, it cheer'd me not;
There came a heaviness across my heart,
Which, in the lightest movement of the dance,
Though eye to eye, and hand in hand united
Even with the lady of my love, oppress'd me,
And through my spirit chill'd my blood, until
A damp like death rose o'er my brow; I strove
To laugh the thought away, but 't would not be;
Through all the music ringing in my ears
A knell was sounding as distinct and clear,
Though low and far, as e'er the Adrian wave
Rose o'er the city's murmur in the night,
Dashing against the outward Lido's bulwark:
So that I left the festival before
It reach'd its zenith, and will woo my pillow
For thoughts more tranquil, or forgetfulness.
Antonio, take my mask and cloak, and light
The lamp within my chamber.
Ant. Yes, my lord:
Command you no refreshment?
Lioni. Nought, save sleep,
Which will not be commanded. Let me hope it,
[*Exit.* ANTONIO.
Though my breast feels too anxious; I will try
Whether the air will calm my spirits: 't is
A goodly night; the cloudy wind which blew
From the Levant hath crept into its cave,
And the broad moon has brighten'd. What a stillness!
[*Goes to an open lattice.*

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And what a contrast with the scene I left,
Where the tall torches' glare, and silver lamps'
More pallid gleam along the tapestried walls,
Spread over the reluctant gloom which haunts
Those vast and dimly-latticed galleries
A dazzling mass of artificial light,
Which show'd all things, but nothing as they were.
There Age essaying to recall the past,
After long striving for the hues of youth
At the sad labour of the toilet, and
Full many a glance at the too faithful mirror,
Prank'd forth in all the pride of ornament,
Forgot itself, and trusting to the falsehood
Of the indulgent beams, which show, yet hide,
Believed itself forgotten, and was fool'd.
There Youth, which needed not, nor thought of such
Vain adjuncts, lavish'd its true bloom, and health,
And bridal beauty, in the unwholesome press
Of flush'd and crowded wassailers, and wasted
Its hours of rest in dreaming this was pleasure,
And so shall waste them till the sunrise streams
On sallow cheeks and sunken eyes, which should not
Have worn this aspect yet for many a year.
The music, and the banquet, and the wine —
The garlands, the rose odours, and the flowers —
The sparkling eyes, and flashing ornaments —
The white arms and the raven hair — the braids
And bracelets; swanlike bosoms, and the necklace,
An India in itself, yet dazzling not
The eye like what it circled; the thin robes,
Floating like light clouds 'twixt our gaze and heaven;
The many-twinkling feet so small and sylphlike,
Suggesting the more secret symmetry
Of the fair forms which terminate so well —
All the delusion of the dizzy scene,
Its false and true enchantments — art and nature,
Which swam before my giddy eyes, that drank
The sight of beauty as the parch'd pilgrim's
On Arab sands the false mirage, which offers
A lucid lake to his eluded thirst,
Are gone.—Around me are the stars and waters—
Worlds mirror'd in the ocean, godlier sight
Than torches glared back by a gaudy glass;
And the great element, which is to space
What ocean is to earth, spreads its blue depths,
Soften'd with the first breathings of the spring;

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The high moon sails upon her beauteous way,
Serenely smoothing o'er the lofty walls
Of those tall piles and sea-girt palaces,
Whose porphyry pillars, and whose costly fronts,
Fraught with the orient spoil of many marbles,
Like altars ranged along the broad canal,
Seem each a trophy of some mighty deed
Rear'd up from out the waters, scarce less strangely
Than those more massy and mysterious giants
Of architecture, those Titanian fabrics,
Which point in Egypt's plains to times that have
No other record. All is gentle: nought
Stirs rudely; but, congenial with the night,
Whatever walks is gliding like a spirit.
The tinklings of some vigilant guitars
Of sleepless lovers to a wakeful mistress,
And cautious opening of the casement, showing
That he is not unheard; while her young hand,
Fair as the moonlight of which it seems part,
So delicately white, it trembles in
The act of opening the forbidden lattice,
To let in love through music, makes his heart
Thrill like his lyre-strings at the sight; the dash
Phosphoric of the oar, or rapid twinkle
Of the far lights of skimming gondolas,
And the responsive voices of the choir
Of boatmen answering back with verse for verse;
Some dusky shadow checkering the Rialto;
Some glimmering palace roof, or tapering spire,
Are all the sights and sounds which here pervade
The ocean-born and earth-commanding city is —
How sweet and soothing is this hour of calm!
I thank thee, Night! for thou hast chased away
Those horrid bodements which, amidst the throng,
I could not dissipate: and with the blessing
Of thy benign and quiet influence, —
Now will I to my couch, although to rest
Is almost wronging such a night as this ——

[*A knocking is heard from without.*

Hark! what is that? or who at such a moment?

Enter ANTONIO.

Ant. My lord, a man without, on urgent business,
Implores to be admitted.

Lioni. Is he a stranger?

Ant. His face is muffled in his cloak, but both
His voice and gestures seem familiar to me;

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I craved his name, but this he seem'd reluctant
To trust, save to yourself; most earnestly
He sues to be permitted to approach you.
Lioni. 'Tis a strange hour, and a suspicious bearing!
And yet there is slight peril: 't is not in
Their houses noble men are struck at; still,
Although I know not that I have a foe
In Venice, 't will be wise to use some caution.
Admit him, and retire; but call up quickly
Some of thy fellows, who may wait without.—
Who can this man be? —
[*Exit* ANTONIO, *and returns with* BERTRAM *muffled.*
Ber. My good Lord Lioni,
I have no time to lose, nor thou — dismiss
This menial hence; I would be private with you.
Lioni. It seems the voice of Bertram — Go, Antonio.
[*Exit* ANTONIO.
Now, stranger, what would you at such an hour?
Ber. (*discovering himself*). A boon, my noble patron; you have granted
Many to your poor client, Bertram; add
This one, and make him happy.
Lioni. Thou hast known me
From boyhood, ever ready to assist thee
In all fair objects of advancement, which
Beseem one of thy station; I would promise
Ere thy request was heard, but that the hour,
Thy bearing, and this strange and hurried mode
Of suing, gives me to suspect this visit
Hath some mysterious import — but say on —
What has occurred, some rash and sudden broil? —
A cup too much, a scuffle, and a stab? —
Mere things of every day; so that thou has not
Spilt noble blood, I guarantee thy safety;
But then thou must withdraw, for angry friends
And relatives, in the first burst of vengeance,
Are things in Venice deadlier than the laws.
Ber. My lord, I thank you; but ——
Lioni. But what? You have not
Raised a rash hand against one of our order?
If so, withdraw and fly, and own it not;
I would not slay — but then I must not save thee!
He who has shed patrician blood ——
Ber. I come
To save patrician blood, and not to shed it!
And thereunto I must be speedy, for

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Each minute lost may lose a life; since Time
Has changed his slow scythe for the two-edged sword,
And is about to take, instead of sand,
The dust from sepulchres to fill his hour-glass! —
Go not *thou* forth to-morrow!

Lioni. Wherefore not? —
What means this menace?

Ber. Do not seek its meaning,
But do I as implore thee; — stir not forth,
Whate'er be stirring; though the roar of crowds —
The cry of women, and the shrieks of babes —
The groans of men — the clash of arms — the sound
Of rolling drum, shrill trump, and hollow bell,
Peal in one wide alarum! — Go not forth
Until the tocsin's silent, nor even then
Till I return

Lioni. Again, what does this mean?

Ber. Again, I tell thee, ask not; but by all
Thou holdest dear on earth or heaven — by all
The souls of thy great fathers, and thy hope
To emulate them, and to leave behind
Descendants worthy both of them and thee —
By all thou hast of bless'd in hope or memory —
By all thou hast to fear here or hereafter —
By all the good deeds thou hast done to me,
Good I would now repay with greater good,
Remain within — trust to thy household gods,
And to my word for safety, if thou dost
As I now counsel — but if not, thou art lost!

Lioni. I am indeed already lost in wonder;
Surely thou ravest! what have *I* to dread?
Who are my foes? or if there be such, *why*
Art *thou* leagued with them? — *thou!* or if so leagued,
Why comest thou to tell me at this hour,
And not before?

Ber. I cannot answer this.
Wilt thou go forth despite of this true warning?

Lioni. I was not born to shrink from idle threats,
The cause of which I know not: at the hour
Of council, be it soon or late, I shall not
Be found among the absent.

Ber. Say not so!
Once more, art thou determined to go forth?

Lioni. I am. Nor is there aught which shall impede me!

Ber. Then Heaven have mercy on thy soul! — Farewell!

[*Going.*

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Lioni. Stay — there is more in this than my own safety
Which makes me call thee back; we must not part thus:
Bertram, I have known thee long.
Ber. From childhood, signor,
You have been my protector: in the days
Of reckless infancy, when rank forgets,
Or, rather, is not yet taught to remember
Its cold prerogative, we play'd together;
Our sports, our smiles, our tears, were mingled oft;
My father was your father's client, I
His son's scarce less than foster-brother; years
Saw us together — happy, heart-full hours!
Oh God! the difference 'twixt those hours and this!
Lioni. Bertram, 'tis thou who hast forgotten them.
Ber. Nor now, nor ever; whatsoe'er betide,
I would have saved you: when to manhood's growth
We sprung, and you, devoted to the state,
As suits your station, the more humble Bertram
Was left unto the labours of the humble,
Still you forsook me not: and if my fortunes
Have not been towering, 't was no fault of him
Who oftimes rescued and supported me
When struggling with the tides of circumstance
Which bear away the weaker: noble blood
Ne'er mantled in a nobler heart than thine
Has proved to me, the poor plebeian Bertram.
Would that thy fellow senators were like thee!
Lioni. Why, what hast thou to say against the senate?
Ber. Nothing.
Lioni. I know that there are angry spirits
And turbulent mutterers of stifled treason,
Who lurk in narrow places, and walk out
Muffled to whisper curses to the night;
Disbanded soldiers, discontented ruffians,
And desperate libertines who brawl in taverns;
Thou herdest not with such: 't is true, of late
I have lost sight of thee, but thou wert wont
To lead a temperate life, and break thy bread
With honest mates, and bear a cheerful aspect.
What hath come to thee? in thy hollow eye
And hueless cheek, and thine unquiet motions,
Sorrow and shame and conscience seem at war
To waste thee.
Ber. Rather shame and sorrow light
On the accursed tyranny which rides
The very air in Venice, and makes men

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Madden as in the last hours of the plague
Which sweeps the soul deliriously from life!
Lioni. Some villains have been tampering with thee, Bertram;
This is not thy old language, nor own thoughts;
Some wretch has made thee drunk with disaffection:
But thou must not be lost so; thou *wert* good
And kind, and art not fit for such base acts
As vice and villany would put thee to:
Confess — confide in me — thou know'st my nature —
What is it thou and thine are bound to do,
What should prevent thy friend, the only son
Of him who was a friend unto thy father,
So that our good-will is a heritage
We should bequeath to our posterity
Such as ourselves received it, or augmented;
I say, what is it thou must do, that I
Should deem thee dangerous, and keep the house
Like a sick girl?
Ber. Nay, question me no further:
I must be gone.——
Lioni. And I be murder'd! — say,
Was it not thus thou said'st, my gentle Bertram?
Ber. Who talks of murder? what said I of murder? —
'Tis false! I did not utter such a word.
Lioni. Thou didst not; but from out thy wolfish eye,
So changed from what I knew it, there glares forth
The gladiator. If *my* life's thine object,
Take it — I am unarm'd, — and then away!
I would not hold my breath on such a tenure
As the capricious mercy of such things
As thou and those who have set thee to thy task-work.
Ber. Sooner than spill thy blood, I peril mine;
Sooner than harm a hair of thine, I place
In jeopardy a thousand heads, and some
As noble, nay, even nobler than thine own.
Lioni. Ay, is it even so? Excuse me, Bertram;
I am not worthy to be singled out
From such exalted hecatombs — who are they
That *are* in danger, and that *make* the danger?
Ber. Venice, and all that she inherits, are
Divided like a house against itself,
And so will perish ere to-morrow's twilight!
Lioni. More mysteries, and awful ones! But now,
Or thou, or I, or both, it may be, are
Upon the verge of ruin; speak once out,

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And thou art safe and glorious ; for 't is more
Glorious to save than slay, and slay i' the dark too —
Fie, Bertram ! that was not a craft for thee !
How would it look to see upon a spear
The head of him whose heart was open to thee,
Borne by thy hand before the shuddering people ?
And such may be my doom ; for here I swear,
Whate'er the peril or the penalty
Of thy denunciation, I go forth,
Unless thou dost detail the cause, and show
The consequence of all which led thee here !

Ber. Is there no way to save thee ? minutes fly,
And thou art lost ! — *thou !* my sole benefactor,
The only being who was constant to me
Through every change. Yet, make me not a traitor !
Let me save thee — but spare my honour !

Lioni. Where
Can lie the honour in a league of murder ?
And who are traitors save unto the state ?

Ber. A league is still a compact, and more binding
In honest hearts when words must stand for law ;
And in my mind, there is no traitor like
He whose domestic treason plants the poniard
Within the breast which trusted to his truth.

Lioni. And *who* will strike the steel to mine ?

Ber. Not I ;
I could have wound my soul up to all things
Save this. *Thou* must not die ! and think how dear
Thy life is, when I risk so many lives,
Nay, more, the life of lives, the liberty
Of future generations, *not* to be
The assassin thou miscall'st me ; — once, once more
I do adjure thee, pass not o'er thy threshold !

Lioni. It is in vain — this moment I go forth.

Ber. Then perish Venice rather than my friend !
I will disclose — ensnare — betray — destroy —
Oh, what a villain I become for thee !

Lioni. Say, rather thy friend's saviour and the state's ! —
Speak — pause not — all rewards, all pledges for
Thy safety and thy welfare ; wealth such as
The state accords her worthiest servants ; nay,
Nobility itself I guarantee thee,
So that thou art sincere and penitent.

Ber. I have thought again : it must not be — I love thee —
Thou knowest it — that I stand here is the proof,

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Not least though last; but having done my duty
By thee, I now must do it by my country!
Farewell — we meet no more in life! — farewell!
Lioni. What, ho! — Antonio — Pedro — to the door!
See that none pass — arrest this man! ——

Enter ANTONIO *and other armed Domestics, who seize* BERTRAM.

Lioni (*continues*). Take care
He hath no harm; bring me my sword and cloak,
And man the gondola with four oars — quick —
[*Exit* ANTONIO.
We will unto Giovanni Gradenigo's,
And send for Marc Cornaro: — fear not, Bertram;
This heedful violence is for thy safety,
No less than for the general weal.
Ber. Where wouldst thou
Bear me a prisoner?
Lioni. Firstly to "the Ten;"
Next to the Doge.
Ber. To the Doge?
Lioni. Assuredly:
Is he not chief of the state?
Ber. Perhaps at sunrise —
Lioni. What mean you? — but we 'll know anon.
Ber. Art sure!
Lioni. Sure as all gentle means can make; and if
They fail, you know "the Ten" and their tribunal,
And that St. Mark's has dungeons, and the dungeons
A rack.
Ber. Apply it then before the dawn
Now hastening into heaven. — One more such word,
And you shall perish piecemeal, by the death
You think to doom to me.

Re-enter ANTONIO.

Ant. The bark is ready,
My lord, and all prepared.
Lioni. Look to the prisoner.
Bertram, I 'll reason with thee as we go
To the Magnifico's, sage Gradenigo. [*Exeunt.*

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SCENE II.

The Ducal Palace. — The Doge's Apartment.

The DOGE *and his nephew* BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

Doge. Are all the people of our house in muster?
Ber. F. They are array'd, and eager for the signal,
Within our palace precincts at San Polo. (1)
I come for your last orders.
Doge. It had been
As well had there been time to have got together,
From my own fief, Val di Marino, more
Of our retainers — but it is too late.
Ber. F. Methinks, my lord, 't is better as it is:
A sudden swelling of our retinue
Had waked suspicion; and, though fierce and trusty,
The vassals of that district are too rude
And quick in quarrel to have long maintain'd
The secret discipline we need for such
A service, till our foes are dealt upon.
Doge. True; but when once the signal has been given,
These are the men for such an enterprise;
These city slaves have all their private bias,
Their prejudice *against* or *for* this noble,
Which may induce them to o'erdo or spare
Where mercy may be madness; the fierce peasants
Serfs of my county of Val di Marino,
Would do the bidding of their lord without
Distinguishing for love or hate his foes;
Alike to them Marcello or Cornaro,
A Gradenigo or a Foscari;
They are not used to start at those vain names,
Nor bow the knee before a civic senate;
A chief in armour is their Suzerain,
And not a thing in robes.
Ber. F. We are enough;
And for the dispositions of our clients
Against the senate I will answer.
Doge. Well,
The die is thrown; but for a warlike service,
Done in the field, commend me to my peasants:

(1) The Doge's family palace.

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They made the sun shine through the host of Huns
When sallow burghers slunk back to their tents,
And cower'd to hear their own victorious trumpet.
If there be small resistance, you will find
These citizens all lions, like their standard;
But if there 's much to do, you 'll wish with me,
A band of iron rustics at our backs

Ber. F. Thus thinking, I must marvel you resolve
To strike the blow so suddenly.

Doge. Such blows
Must be struck suddenly or never. When
I had o'ermaster'd the weak false remorse
Which yearn'd about my heart, too fondly yielding
A moment to the feelings of old days,
I was most fain to strike; and, firstly, that
I might not yield again to such emotions;
And, secondly, because of all these men,
Save Israel and Philip Calendaro,
I know not well the courage or the faith:
To-day might find 'mongst them a traitor to us,
As yesterday a thousand to the senate;
But once in, with their hilts hot in their hands,
They must *on* for their own sakes; one stroke struck,
And the mere instinct of the first-born Cain,
Which ever lurks somewhere in human hearts,
Though circumstance may keep it in abeyance,
Will urge the rest on like to wolves; the sight
Of blood to crowds begets the thirst of more,
As the first wine-cup leads to the long revel;
And you will find a harder task to quell
Than urge them when they *have* commenced, but *till*
That moment, a mere voice, a straw, a shadow,
Are capable of turning them aside. —
How goes the night?

Ber. F. Almost upon the dawn.

Doge. Then it is time to strike upon the bell.
Are the men posted?

Ber. F. By this time they are;
But they have orders not to strike, until
They have command from you through me in person.

Doge. 'T is well. — Will the morn never put to rest
These stars which twinkle yet o'er all the heavens?
I am settled and bound up, and being so,
The very effort which it cost me to
Resolve to cleanse this commonwealth with fire,
Now leaves my mind more steady. I have wept,

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And trembled at the thought of this dread duty;
But now I have put down all idle passion,
And look the growing tempest in the face,
As doth the pilot of an admiral galley:
Yet (wouldst thou think it, kinsman?) it hath been
A greater struggle to me, than when nations
Beheld their fate merged in the approaching fight,
Where I was leader of a phalanx, where
Thousands were sure to perish — Yes, to spill
The rank polluted current from the veins
Of a few bloated despots needed more
To steel me to a purpose such as made
Timoleon immortal, than to face
The toils and dangers of a life of war.

Ber. F. It gladdens me to see your former wisdom
Subdue the furies which so wrung you ere
You were decided.

Doge. It was ever thus
With me; the hour of agitation came
In the first glimmerings of a purpose, when
Passion had too much room to sway; but in
The hour of action I have stood as calm
As were the dead who lay around me: this
They knew who made me what I am, and trusted
To the subduing power which I preserved
Over my mood, when its first burst was spent.
But they were not aware that there are things
Which make revenge a virtue by reflection,
And not an impulse of mere anger; though
The laws sleep, justice wakes, and injured souls
Oft do a public right with private wrong,
And justify their deeds unto themselves. —
Methinks the day breaks — is it not so? look,
Thine eyes are clear with youth; — the air puts on
A morning freshness, and, at least to me,
The sea looks grayer through the lattice.

Ber. F. True,
The morn is dappling in the sky.

Doge. Away then!
See that they strike without delay, and with
The first toll from St. Mark's, march on the palace
With all our house's strength; here I will meet you —
The Sixteen and their companies will move
In separate columns at the self-same moment —
Be sure you post yourself at the great gate:
I would not trust "the Ten" except to us —

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The rest, the rabble of patricians, may
Glut the more careless swords of those leagued with us.
Remember that the cry is still "Saint Mark!
The Genoese are come — ho! to the rescue!
Saint Mark and Liberty!" — Now — now to action!

Ber. F. Farewell then, noble uncle! we will meet
In freedom and true sovereignty, or never!

Doge. Come hither, my Bertuccio — one embrace —
Speed, for the day grows broader — Send me soon
A messenger to tell me how all goes
When you rejoin our troops, and then sound — sound
The storm-bell from Saint Mark's!

[*Exit* BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

Doge (*solus*). He is gone,
And on each footstep moves a life. — 'T is done.
Now the destroying Angel hovers o'er
Venice, and pauses ere he pours the vial,
Even as the eagle overlooks his prey,
And for a moment, poised in middle air,
Suspends the motion of his mighty wings,
Then swoops with his unerring beak. — Thou day!
That slowly walk'st the waters! march — march on —
I would not smite i' the dark, but rather see
That no stroke errs. And you, ye blue sea-waves!
I have seen you dyed ere now, and deeply too,
With Genoese, Saracen, and Hunnish gore,
While that of Venice flow'd too, but victorious;
Now thou must wear an unmix'd crimson; no
Barbaric blood can reconcile us now
Unto that horrible incarnadine,
But friend or foe will roll in civic slaughter.
And have I lived to fourscore years for this?
I, who was named Preserver of the City?
I, at whose name the million's caps were flung
Into the air, and cries from tens of thousands
Rose up, imploring Heaven to send me blessings,
And fame, and length of days — to see this day?
But this day, black within the calendar,
Shall be succeeded by a bright millennium
Doge Dandolo survived to ninety summers
To vanquish empires, and refuse their crown;
I will resign a crown, and make the state
Renew its freedom — but oh! by what means?
The noble end must justify them — What
Are a few drops of human blood? 't is false,
The blood of tyrants is not human; they,

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Like to incarnate Molochs, feed on ours,
Until 't is time to give them to the tombs
Which they have made so populous. — Oh world!
Oh men! what are ye, and our best designs,
That we must work by crime to punish crime?
And slay as if Death had but this one gate,
When a few years would make the sword superfluous?
And I, upon the verge of th' unknown realm,
Yet send so many heralds on before me? —
I must not ponder this [*A pause.*
Hark! was there not
A murmur as of distant voices, and
The tramp of feet in martial unison?
What phantoms even of sound our wishes raise!
It cannot be — the signal hath not rung —
Why pauses it? My nephew's messenger
Should be upon his way to me, and he
Himself perhaps even now draws grating back
Upon its ponderous hinge the steep tower portal,
Where swings the sullen huge oracular bell,
Which never knells but for a princely death,
Or for a state in peril, pealing forth
Tremendous bodements; let it do its office,
And be this peal its awfullest and last
Sound till the strong tower rock! — What! silent still?
I would go forth, but that my post is here,
To be the centre of re-union to
The oft discordant elements which form
Leagues of this nature, and to keep compact
The wavering of the weak, in case of conflict;
For if they should do battle, 't will be here,
Within the palace, that the strife will thicken;
Then here must be my station, as becomes
The master-mover. —— Hark! he comes — he comes,
My nephew, brave Bertuccio's messenger. —
What tidings? Is he marching? hath he sped? —
They here! — all 's lost — yet will I make an effort.

Enter a SIGNOR OF THE NIGHT, *with Guards, &c. &c.*

Sig. Doge, I arrest thee of high treason!
Doge. Me!
Thy prince, of treason? — Who are they that dare
Cloak their own treason under such an order?
Sig. (*showing his order*). Behold my order from the assembled Ten.

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Doge. And *where* are they, and *why* assembled? no
Such council can be lawful, till the prince
Preside there, and that duty 's mine: on thine
I charge thee, give me way, or marshal me
To the council chamber.
Sig. Duke! it may not be:
Nor are they in the wonted Hall of Council,
But sitting in the convent of Saint Saviour's.
Doge. You dare to disobey me, then?
Sig. I serve
The state, and needs must serve it faithfully;
My warrant is the will of those who rule it.
Doge. And till that warrant has my signature
It is illegal, and, as *now* applied,
Rebellious — Hast thou weigh'd well thy life's worth,
That thus you dare assume a lawless function?
Sig. 'T is not my office to reply, but act —
I am placed here as guard upon thy person,
And not as judge to hear or to decide.
Doge (*aside*). I must gain time — So that the storm-bell sound
All may be well yet.— Kinsman, speed — speed — speed! —
Our fate is trembling in the balance, and
Woe to the vanquish'd! be they prince and people,
Or slaves and senate —
[*The great bell of Saint Mark's tolls.*
Lo! it sounds — it tolls!
Doge (*aloud*). Hark, Signor of the Night! and you, ye hirelings,
Who wield your mercenary staves in fear,
It is your knell — Swell on, thou lusty peal!
Now, knaves, what ransom for your lives?
Sig. Confusion!
Stand to your arms, and guard the door — all 's lost
Unless that fearful bell be silenced soon.
The officer hath miss'd his path or purpose,
Or met some unforeseen and hideous obstacle.
Anselmo, with thy company proceed
Straight to the tower; the rest remain with me.
[*Exit part of the Guard.*
Doge. Wretch! if thou wouldst have thy vile life, implore it;
It is not now a lease of sixty seconds.
Ay, send thy miserable ruffians forth;
They never shall return.
Sig. So let it be!

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They die then in their duty, as will I.
Doge. Fool! the high eagle flies at nobler game
Than thou and thy base myrmidons, — live on,
So thou provok'st not peril by resistance,
And learn (if souls so much obscured can bear
To gaze upon the sunbeams) to be free.
Sig. And learn thou to be captive — It hath ceased,
[*The bell ceases to toll.*
The traitorous signal, which was to have set
The bloodhound mob on their patrician prey —
The knell hath rung, but it is not the senate's!
Doge (*after a pause*). All 's silent, and all 's lost!
Sig. Now, Doge, denounce me
As rebel slave of a revolted council!
Have I not done my duty?
Doge. Peace, thou thing!
Thou hast done a worthy deed, and earn'd the price
Of blood, and they who use thee will reward thee.
But thou wert sent to watch, and not to prate,
As thou said'st even now — then do thine office,
But let it be in silence, as behoves thee,
Since, though thy prisoner, I am thy prince.
Sig. I did not mean to fail in the respect
Due to your rank: in this I shall obey you.
Doge (*aside*). There now is nothing left me save to die;
And yet how near success! I would have fallen,
And proudly, in the hour of triumph, but
To miss it thus! ——

Enter other SIGNORS OF THE NIGHT, *with* BERTUCCIO FALIERO *prisoner.*

2d Sig. We took him in the act
Of issuing from the tower, where, at his order,
As delegated from the Doge, the signal
Had thus begun to sound.
1st Sig. Are all the passes
Which lead up to the palace well secured?
2d Sig. They are — besides, it matters not; the chiefs
Are all in chains, and some even now on trial —
Their followers are dispersed, and many taken.
Ber. F. Uncle!
Doge. It is in vain to war with Fortune;
The glory hath departed from our house.
Ber. F. Who would have deem'd it? — Ah! one moment sooner!

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Doge. That moment would have changed the face of ages;
This gives us to eternity — We 'll meet it
As men whose triumph is not in success,
But who can make their own minds all in all,
Equal to every fortune. Droop not, 't is
But a brief passage — I would go alone,
Yet if they send us, as 't is like, together,
Let us go worthy of our sires and selves,
Ber. F. I shall not shame you, uncle.
1st Sig. Lords, our orders
Are to keep guard on both in separate chambers,
Until the council call ye to your trial.
Doge. Our trial! will they keep their mockery up
Even to the last? but let them deal upon us
As we had dealt on them, but with less pomp.
'T is but a game of mutual homicides,
Who have cast lots for the first death, and they
Have won with false dice. — Who hath been our Judas?
1st Sig. I am not warranted to answer that.
Ber. F. I 'll answer for thee — 't is a certain Bertram,
Even now deposing to the secret giunta.
Doge. Bertram, the Bergamask! With what vile tools
We operate to slay or save! This creature,
Black with a double treason, now will earn
Rewards and honours, and be stamp'd in story
With the geese in the Capitol, which gabbled
Till Rome awoke, and had an annual triumph,
While Manlius, who hurl'd down the Gauls, was cast
From the Tarpeian.
1st Sig. He aspired to treason,
And sought to rule the state.
Doge. He saved the state,
And sought but to reform what he revived —
But this is idle —— Come, sirs, do your work.
1st Sig. Noble Bertuccio, we must now remove you
Into an inner chamber.
Ber. F. Farewell, uncle!
If we shall meet again in life I know not,
But they perhaps will let our ashes mingle.
Doge. Yes, and our spirits, which shall yet go forth,
And do what our frail clay, thus clogg'd, hath fail'd in!
They cannot quench the memory of those
Who would have hurl'd them from their guilty thrones,
And such examples will find heirs, though distant.

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ACT V.

SCENE I.

The Hall of the Council of Ten assembled with the additional Senators, who, on the Trials of the Conspirators for the Treason of MARINO FALIERO, *composed what was called the Giunta. — Guards, Officers, &c. &c. —* ISRAEL BERTUCCIO *and* PHILIP CALENDARO *as Prisoners. —* BERTRAM, LIONI, *and Witnesses, &c.*

The Chief of the Ten, BENINTENDE.

Ben. There now rests, after such conviction of
Their manifold and manifest offences,
But to pronounce on these obdurate men
The sentence of the law: — a grievous task
To those who hear, and those who speak. Alas!
That it should fall to me! and that my days
Of office should be stigmatised through all
The years of coming time, as bearing record
To this most foul and complicated treason
Against a just and free state, known to all
The earth as being the Christian bulwark 'gainst
The Saracen and the schismatic Greek,
The savage Hun, and not less barbarous Frank;
A city which has open'd India's wealth
To Europe; the last Roman refuge from
O'erwhelming Attila; the ocean's queen;
Proud Genoa's prouder rival! 'T is to sap
The throne of such a city, these lost men
Have risk'd and forfeited their worthless lives —
So let them die the death.

I. Ber. We are prepared;
Your racks have done that for us. Let us die.

Ben. If ye have that to say which would obtain
Abatement of your punishment, the Giunta
Will hear you; if you have aught to confess,
Now is your time, perhaps it may avail ye.

I. Ber. We stand to hear, and not to speak.

Ben. Your crimes
Are fully proved by your accomplices,
And all which circumstance can add to aid them;

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Yet we would hear from your own lips complete
Avowal of your treason: on the verge
Of that dread gulf which none repass, the truth
Alone can profit you on earth or heaven —
Say, then, what was your motive?
I. Ber. Justice!
Ben. What
Your object?
I. Ber. Freedom!
Ben. You are brief, sir.
I. Ber. So my life grows: I
Was bred a soldier, not a senator.
Ben. Perhaps you think by this blunt brevity
To brave your judges to postpone the sentence?
I. Ber. Do you be brief as I am, and believe me,
I shall prefer that mercy to your pardon.
Ben. Is this your sole reply to the tribunal?
I. Ber. Go, ask your racks what they have wrung from us,
Or place us there again; we have still some blood left,
And some slight sense of pain in these wrench'd limbs:
But this ye dare not do; for if we die there —
And you have left us little life to spend
Upon your engines, gorged with pangs already —
Ye lose the public spectacle, with which
You would appal your slaves to further slavery!
Groans are not words, nor agony assent,
Nor affirmation truth, if nature's sense
Should overcome the soul into a lie,
For a short respite — must we bear or die?
Ben. Say, who are your accomplices?
I. Ber. The Senate!
Ben. What do you mean?
I. Ber. Ask of the suffering people,
Whom your patrician crimes have driven to crime.
Ben. You know the Doge?
I. Ber. I served with him at Zara
In the field, when *you* were pleading here your way
To present office; we exposed our lives,
While you but hazarded the lives of others,
Alike by accusation or defence;
And, for the rest, all Venice knows her Doge,
Through his great actions, and the Senate's insults.
Ben. You have held conference with him?
I. Ber. I am weary —
Even wearier of your questions than your tortures:
I pray you pass to judgment.

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Ben. It is coming. —
And you, too, Philip Calendaro, what
Have you to say why you should not be doom'd?
Cal. I never was a man of many words,
And now have few left worth the utterance.
Ben. A further application of yon engine
May change your tone.
Cal. Most true: it *will* do so;
A former application did so; but
It will not change my words, or, if it did —
Ben. What then?
Cal. Will my avowal on yon rack
Stand good in law?
Ben. Assuredly.
Cal. Whoe'er
The culprit be whom I accuse of treason?
Ben. Without doubt, he will be brought up to trial.
Cal. And on this testimony would he perish?
Ben. So your confession be detail'd and full,
He will stand here in peril of his life.
Cal. Then look well to thy proud self, President!
For by the eternity which yawns before me,
I swear that *thou*, and only thou, shalt be
The traitor I denounce upon that rack,
If I be stretch'd there for the second time.
One of the Giunta. Lord President, 't were best proceed to judgment;
There is no more to be drawn from these men.
Ben. Unhappy men! prepare for instant death.
The nature of your crime — our law — and peril
The state now stands in, leave not an hour's respite —
Guards! lead them forth, and upon the balcony
Of the red columns, where, on festal Thursday, (1)
The Doge stands to behold the chase of bulls,
Let them be justified: and leave exposed
Their wavering relics, in the place of judgment,
To the full view of the assembled people! —
And Heaven have mercy on their souls!
The Giunta. Amen!
I. Ber. Signors, farewell! we shall not all again
Meet in one place.
Ben. And lest they should essay
To stir up the distracted multitude —

(1) "Giovedì grasso," — "fat or greasy Thursday," — which I cannot literally translate in the text, was the day.

Guards! let their mouths be gagg'd, (1) even in the act
Of execution. — Lead them hence!
Cal. What! must we
Not even say farewell to some fond friend,
Nor leave a last word with our confessor?
Ben. A priest is waiting in the antechamber;
But, for your friends, such interviews would be
Painful to them, and useless all to you.
Cal. I knew that we were gagg'd in life; at least
All those who had not heart to risk their lives
Upon their open thoughts; but still I deem'd
That in the last few moments, the same idle
Freedom of speech accorded to the dying,
Would not now be denied to us; but since ——
I. Ber. Even let them have their way, brave Calendaro!
What matter a few syllables? let 's die
Without the slightest show of favour from them;
So shall our blood more readily arise
To Heaven against them, and more testify
To their atrocities, than could a volume
Spoken or written of our dying words!
They tremble at our voices — nay, they dread
Our very silence — let them live in fear! —
Leave them unto their thoughts, and let us now
Address our own above! — Lead on; we are ready.
Cal. Israel, hadst thou but hearken'd unto me
It had not now been thus; and yon pale villain,
The coward Bertram, would ——
I. Ber. Peace, Calendaro!
What brooks it now to ponder upon this?
Bert. Alas! I fain you died in peace with me:
I did not seek this task; 't was forced upon me:
Say, you forgive me, though I never can
Retrieve my own forgiveness — frown not thus!
I. Ber. I die and pardon thee!
Cal. (*spitting at him*). I die and scorn thee!
[*Exeunt* ISRAEL BERTUCCIO *and* PHILIP CALENDARO, *Guards, &c.*
Ben. Now that these criminals have been disposed of,
'T is time that we proceed to pass our sentence
Upon the greatest traitor upon record
In any annals, the Doge Faliero!
The proofs and process are complete; the time
And crime require a quick procedure: shall

(1) Historical fact. See Sanuto, APPENDIX, Note (A).

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He now be call'd in to receive the award?
The Giunta. Ay, ay.
Ben. Avogadori, order that the Doge
Be brought before the council.
One of the Giunta. And the rest,
When shall they be brought up?
Ben. When all the chiefs
Have been disposed of. Some have fled to Chiozza;
But there are thousands in pursuit of them,
And such precaution ta'en on terra firma,
As well as in the islands, that we hope
None will escape to utter in strange lands
His libellous tale of treasons 'gainst the senate.

Enter the DOGE *as Prisoner, with Guards, &c. &c.*

Ben. Doge — for such still you are, and by the law
Must be consider'd, till the hour shall come
When you must doff the ducal bonnet from
That head, which could not wear a crown more noble
Than empires can confer, in quiet honour,
But it must plot to overthrow your peers,
Who made you what you are, and quench in blood
A city's glory — we have laid already
Before you in your chamber at full length,
By the Avogadori, all the proofs
Which have appear'd against you; and more ample
Ne'er rear'd their sanguinary shadows to
Confront a traitor. What have you to say
In your defence?
Doge. What shall I say to ye,
Since my defence must be your condemnation?
You are at once offenders and accusers,
Judges and executioners! — Proceed
Upon your power.
Ben. Your chief accomplices
Having confess'd, there is no hope for you.
Doge. And who be they?
Ben. In number many; but
The first now stands before you in the court,
Bertram, of Bergamo, — would you question him?
Doge (*looking at him contemptuously*). No.
Ben. And two others, Israel Bertuccio,
And Philip Calendaro, have admitted
Their fellowship in treason with the Doge!
Doge. And where are they?

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Ben. Gone to their place, and now
Answering to Heaven for what they did on earth.
Doge. Ah! the plebeian Brutus, is he gone?
And the quick Cassius of the arsenal? —
How did they meet their doom?
Ben. Think of your own;
It is approaching. You decline to plead, then?
Doge. I cannot plead to my inferiors, nor
Can recognise your legal power to try me.
Show me the law!
Ben. On great emergencies,
The law must be remodell'd or amended:
Our fathers had not fix'd the punishment
Of such a crime, as on the old Roman tables
The sentence against parricide was left
In pure forgetfulness; they could not render
That penal, which had neither name nor thought
In their great bosoms: who would have foreseen
That nature could be filed to such a crime
As sons 'gainst sires, and princes 'gainst their realms?
Your sin hath made us make a law which will
Become a precedent 'gainst such haught traitors,
As would with treason mount to tyranny;
Not even contented with a sceptre, till
They can convert it to a two-edged sword!
Was not the place of Doge sufficient for ye?
What 's nobler than the signory of Venice?
Doge. The signory of Venice! You betray'd me —
You — *you*, who sit there, traitors as ye are!
From my equality with you in birth,
And my superiority in action,
You drew me from my honourable toils
In distant lands — on flood — in field — in cities —
You singled me out like a victim to
Stand crown'd, but bound and helpless, at the altar
Where you alone could minister. I knew not —
I sought not — wish'd not — dream'd not the election,
Which reach'd me first at Rome, and I obey'd;
But found on my arrival, that, besides
The jealous vigilance which always led you
To mock and mar your sovereign's best intents,
You had, even in the interregnum of
My journey to the capital, curtail'd
And mutilated the few privileges
Yet left the duke: all this I bore, and would
Have borne, until my very hearth was stain'd

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By the pollution of your ribaldry,
And he, the ribald, whom I see amongst you —
Fit judge in such tribunal! —

Ben. (*interrupting him*). Michel Steno
Is here in virtue of his office, as
One of the Forty; "the Ten" having craved
A Giunta of patricians from the senate
To aid our judgment in a trial arduous
And novel as the present: he was set
Free from the penalty pronounced upon him,
Because the Doge, who should protect the law,
Seeking to abrogate all law, can claim
No punishment of others by the statutes
Which he himself denies and violates!

Doge. *His* PUNISHMENT! I rather see him *there*,
Where he now sits, to glut him with my death,
Than in the mockery of castigation,
Which your foul, outward, juggling show of justice
Decreed as sentence! Base as was his crime,
'T was purity compared with your protection.

Ben. And can it be, that the great Doge of Venice,
With three parts of a century of years
And honours on his head, could thus allow
His fury, like an angry boy's, to master
All feeling, wisdom, faith, and fear, on such
A provocation as a young man's petulance?

Doge. A spark creates the flame — 't is the last drop
Which makes the cup run o'er, and mine was full
Already: you oppress'd the prince and people;
I would have freed both, and have fail'd in both:
The price of such success would have been glory,
Vengeance, and victory, and such a name
As would have made Venetian history
Rival to that of Greece and Syracuse
When they were freed, and flourish'd ages after,
And mine to Gelon and to Thrasybulus: —
Failing, I know the penalty of failure
Is present infamy and death — the future
Will judge, when Venice is no more, or free;
Till then, the truth is in abeyance. Pause not;
I would have shown no mercy, and I seek none;
My life was staked upon a mighty hazard,
And being lost, take what I would have taken!
I would have stood alone amidst your tombs:
Now you may flock round mine, and trample on it,
As you have done upon my heart while living.

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Ben. You do confess then, and admit the justice
Of our tribunal?
Doge. I confess to have fail'd;
Fortune is female: from my youth her favours
Were not withheld, the fault was mine to hope
Her former smiles again at this late hour.
Ben. You do not then in aught arraign our equity?
Doge. Noble Venetians! stir me not with questions.
I am resign'd to the worst; but in me still
Have something of the blood of brighter days,
And am not over-patient. Pray you, spare me
Further interrogation, which boots nothing,
Except to turn a trial to debate.
I shall but answer that which will offend you,
And please your enemies — a host already;
'T is true, these sullen walls should yield no echo:
But walls have ears — nay, more, they have tongues; and if
There were no other way for truth to o'erleap them,
You who condemn me, you who fear and slay me,
Yet could not bear in silence to your graves
What you would hear from me of good or evil;
The secret were too mighty for your souls:
Then let it sleep in mine, unless you court
A danger which would double that you escape.
Such my defence would be, had I full scope
To make it famous; for true *words* are *things*,
And dying men's are things which long outlive,
And oftentimes avenge them; bury mine,
If ye would fain survive me: take this counsel,
And though too oft ye made me live in wrath,
Let me die calmly; you may grant me this; —
I deny nothing — defend nothing — nothing
I ask of you, but silence for myself,
And sentence from the court!
Ben. This full admission
Spares us the harsh necessity of ordering
The torture to elicit the whole truth.
Doge. The torture! you have put me there already,
Daily since I was Doge; but if you will
Add the corporeal rack, you may: these limbs
Will yield with age to crushing iron; but
There's that within my heart shall strain your engines.

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Enter an OFFICER.

Officer. Noble Venetians! Duchess Faliero
Requests admission to the Giunta's presence.
Ben. Say, conscript fathers, (1) shall she be admitted?
One of the Giunta. She may have revelations of importance
Unto the state, to justify compliance
With her request.
Ben. Is this the general will?
All. It is.
Doge. Oh, admirable laws of Venice!
Which would admit the wife, in the full hope
That she might testify against the husband.
What glory to the chaste Venetian dames!
But such blasphemers 'gainst all honour, as
Sit here, do well to act in their vocation.
Now, villain Steno! if this woman fail,
I 'll pardon thee thy lie, and thy escape,
And my own violent death, and thy vile life.

The DUCHESS *enters.*

Ben. Lady! this just tribunal has resolved,
Though the request be strange, to grant it, and
Whatever be its purport, to accord
A patient hearing with the due respect
Which fits your ancestry, your rank, and virtues:
But you turn pale — ho! there, look to the lady!
Place a chair instantly.
Ang. A moment's faintness —
'Tis past; I pray you pardon me, — I sit not
In presence of my prince and of my husband,
While he is on his feet.
Ben. Your pleasure, lady?
Ang. Strange rumours, but most true, if all I hear
And see be sooth, have reach'd me, and I come
To know the worst, even at the worst; forgive
The abruptness of my entrance and my bearing.
It is —— I cannot speak — I cannot shape
The question — but you answer it ere spoken,
With eyes averted, and with gloomy brows —
Oh God! this is the silence of the grave!

(1) The Venetian senate took the same title as the Roman, of "Conscript Fathers."

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Ben. (*after a pause*). Spare us, and spare thyself the repetition
Of our most awful, but inexorable
Duty to heaven and man!
Ang. Yet speak; I cannot —
I cannot — no — even now believe these things.
Is *he* condemn'd?
Ben. Alas!
Ang. And was he guilty?
Ben. Lady! the natural distraction of
Thy thoughts at such a moment makes the question
Merit forgiveness; else a doubt like this
Against a just and paramount tribunal
Were deep offence. But question even the Doge,
And if he can deny the proofs, believe him
Guiltless as thy own bosom.
Ang. Is it so?
My lord — my sovereign — my poor father's friend —
The mighty in the field, the sage in council;
Unsay the words of this man! — Thou art silent!
Ben. He hath already own'd to his own guilt,
Nor, as thou see'st, doth he deny it now.
Ang. Ay, but he must not die! Spare his few years,
Which grief and shame will soon cut down to days!
One day of baffled crime must not efface
Near sixteen lustres crowded with brave acts.
Ben. His doom must be fulfill'd without remission
Of time or penalty — 't is a decree.
Ang. He hath been guilty, but there may be mercy.
Ben. Not in this case with justice.
Ang. Alas! signor,
He who is only just is cruel; who
Upon the earth would live were all judged justly?
Ben. His punishment is safety to the state.
Ang. He was a subject, and hath served the state;
He was your general, and hath saved the state;
He is your sovereign, and hath ruled the state.
One of the Council. He is a traitor, and betray'd the state.
Ang. And, but for him, there now had been no state
To save or to destroy; and you, who sit
There to pronounce the death of your deliverer,
Had now been groaning at a Moslem oar,
Or digging in the Hunnish mines in fetters!
One of the Council. No, lady, there are others who would die

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Rather than breathe in slavery!
Ang. If there are so
Within *these* walls, *thou* art not of the number:
The truly brave are generous to the fallen! —
Is there no hope?
Ben. Lady, it cannot be.
Ang. (*turning to the Doge*). Then die, Faliero! since it must be so;
But with the spirit of my father's friend.
Thou hast been guilty of a great offence,
Half cancell'd by the harshness of these men.
I would have sued to them — have pray'd to them —
Have begg'd as famish'd mendicants for bread —
Have wept as they will cry unto their God
For mercy, and be answer'd as they answer —
Had it been fitting for thy name or mine,
And if the cruelty in their cold eyes
Had not announced the heartless wrath within.
Then, as a prince, address thee to thy doom!
Doge. I have lived too long not to know how to die!
Thy suing to these men were but the bleating
Of the lamb to the butcher, or the cry
Of seamen to the surge: I would not take
A life eternal, granted at the hands
Of wretches, from whose monstrous villanies
I sought to free the groaning nations!
Michel Steno. Doge,
A word with thee, and with this noble lady,
Whom I have grievously offended. Would
Sorrow, or shame, or penance on my part,
Could cancel the inexorable past!
But since that cannot be, as Christians let us
Say farewell, and in peace: with full contrition
I crave, not pardon, but compassion from you,
And give, however weak, my prayers for both.
Ang. Sage Benintende, now chief judge of Venice,
I speak to thee in answer to yon signor.
Inform the ribald Steno, that his words
Ne'er weigh'd in mind with Loredano's daughter
Further than to create a moment's pity
For such as he is: would that others had
Despised him as I pity! I prefer
My honour to a thousand lives, could such
Be multiplied in mine, but would not have
A single life of others lost for that
Which nothing human can impugn — the sense

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Of virtue, looking not to what is call'd
A good name for reward, but to itself.
To me the scorner's words were as the wind
Unto the rock: but as there are — alas!
Spirits more sensitive, on which such things
Light as the whirlwind on the waters; souls
To whom dishonour's shadow is a substance
More terrible than death, here and hereafter;
Men whose vice is to start at vice's scoffing,
And who, though proof against all blandishments
Of pleasure, and all pangs of pain, are feeble
When the proud name on which they pinnacled
Their hopes is breathed on, jealous as the eagle
Of her high aiery; let what we now
Behold, and feel, and suffer, be a lesson
To wretches how they tamper in their spleen
With beings of a higher order. Insects
Have made the lion mad ere now; a shaft
I' the heel o'erthrew the bravest of the brave;
A wife's dishonour was the bane of Troy;
A wife's dishonour unking'd Rome for ever;
An injured husband brought the Gauls to Clusium,
And thence to Rome, which perish'd for a time;
An obscene gesture cost Caligula
His life, while Earth yet bore his cruelties;
A virgin's wrong made Spain a Moorish province;
And Steno's lie, couch'd in two worthless lines,
Hath decimated Venice, put in peril
A senate which hath stood eight hundred years,
Discrown'd a prince, cut off his crownless head,
And forged new fetters for a groaning people!
Let the poor wretch, like to the courtesan
Who fired Persepolis, be proud of this,
If it so please him — 't were a pride fit for him!
But let him not insult the last hours of
Him, who, whate'er he now is, *was* a hero,
By the intrusion of his very prayers;
Nothing of good can come from such a source,
Nor would we aught with him, nor now, nor ever:
We leave him to himself, that lowest depth
Of human baseness. Pardon is for men,
And not for reptiles — we have none for Steno,
And no resentment: things like him must sting,
And higher beings suffer; 't is the charter
Of life. The man who dies by the adder's fang
May have the crawler crush'd; but feels no anger:

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'T was the worm's nature; and some men are worms
In soul, more than the living things of tombs.
Doge (*to Ben.*). Signor! complete that which you deem
your duty.
Ben. Before we can proceed upon that duty,
We would request the princess to withdraw;
'T will move her too much to be witness to it.
Ang. I know it will, and yet I must endure it,
For 't is a part of mine — I will not quit,
Except by force, my husband's side.— Proceed!
Nay, fear not either shriek, or sigh, or tear;
Though my heart burst, it shall be silent.— Speak!
I have that within which shall o'ermaster all.
Ben. Marino Faliero, Doge of Venice,
Count of Val di Marino, Senator,
And some time General of the Fleet and Army,
Noble Venetian, many times and oft
Intrusted by the state with high employments,
Even to the highest, listen to the sentence.
Convict by many witnesses and proofs,
And by thine own confession, of the guilt
Of treachery and treason, yet unheard of
Until this trial — the decree is death.
Thy goods are confiscate unto the state,
Thy name is razed from out her records, save
Upon a public day of thanksgiving
For this our most miraculous deliverance,
When thou art noted in our calendars
With earthquakes, pestilence, and foreign foes,
And the great enemy of man, as subject
Of grateful masses for Heaven's grace in snatching
Our lives and country from thy wickedness.
The place wherein as Doge thou shouldst be painted,
With thine illustrious predecessors, is
To be left vacant, with a death-black veil
Flung over these dim words engraved beneath, —
"This place is of Marino Faliero,
Decapitated for his crimes."
Doge. "His crimes!"
But let it be so: — it will be in vain.
The veil which blackens o'er this blighted name,
And hides, or seems to hide, these lineaments,
Shall draw more gazers than the thousand portraits
Which glitter round it in their pictured trappings —
Your delegated slaves — the people's tyrants!
"Decapitated for his crimes!" — *What* crimes?

Google

Were it not better to record the facts,
So that the contemplator might approve,
Or at the least learn *whence* the crimes arose?
When the beholder knows a Doge conspired,
Let him be told the cause — it is your history.

Ben. Time must reply to that; our sons will judge
Their fathers' judgment, which I now pronounce.
As Doge, clad in the ducal robes and cap,
Thou shalt be led hence to the Giants' Staircase,
Where thou and all our princes are invested;
And there, the ducal crown being first resumed
Upon the spot where it was first assumed,
Thy head shall be struck off; and Heaven have mercy
Upon thy soul!

Doge. Is this the Giunta's sentence?

Ben. It is.

Doge. I can endure it. — And the time?

Ben. Must be immediate.— Make thy peace with God:
Within an hour thou must be in His presence.

Doge. I am already; and my blood will rise
To Heaven before the souls of those who shed it.—
Are all my lands confiscated?

Ben. They are;
And goods, and jewels, and all kind of treasure,
Except two thousand ducats — these dispose of.

Doge. That 's harsh.— I would have fain reserved the lands
Near to Treviso, which I hold by investment
From Laurence the Count-bishop of Ceneda,
In fief perpetual to myself and heirs,
To portion them (leaving my city spoil,
My palace and my treasures, to your forfeit)
Between my consort and my kinsmen.

Ben. These
Lie under the state's ban; their chief, thy nephew,
In peril of his own life; but the council
Postpones his trial for the present. If
Thou will'st a state unto thy widow'd princess,
Fear not, for we will do her justice.

Ang. Signors,
I share not in your spoil! From henceforth, know
I am devoted unto God alone,
And take my refuge in the cloister.

Doge. Come!
The hour may be a hard one, but 't will end.
Have I aught else to undergo save death?

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Ben. You have nought to do, except confess and die.
The priest is robed, the scimitar is bare,
And both await without.— But, above all,
Think not to speak unto the people; they
Are now by thousands swarming at the gates,
But these are closed: the Ten, the Avogadori,
The Giunta, and the chief men of the Forty,
Alone will be beholders of thy doom,
And they are ready to attend the Doge.

Doge. The Doge!

Ben. Yes, Doge, thou hast lived and thou shalt die
A sovereign; till the moment which precedes
The separation of that head and trunk,
The ducal crown and head shall be united.
Thou hast forgot thy dignity in deigning
To plot with petty traitors; not so we,
Who in the very punishment acknowledge
The prince. Thy vile accomplices have died
The dog's death, and the wolf's; but thou shalt fall
As falls the lion by the hunters, girt
By those who feel a proud compassion for thee,
And mourn even the inevitable death
Provoked by thy wild wrath, and regal fierceness.
Now we remit thee to thy preparation:
Let it be brief, and we ourselves will be
Thy guides unto the place where first we were
United to thee as thy subjects, and
Thy senate; and must now be parted from thee
As such for ever, on the self-same spot.—
Guards! form the Doge's escort to his chamber.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

The Doge's Apartment.

The DOGE *as Prisoner, and the* DUCHESS *attending him.*

Doge. Now, that the priest is gone, 't were useless
To linger out the miserable minutes;
But one pang more, the pang of parting from thee,
And I will leave the few last grains of sand,
Which yet remain of the accorded hour,
Still falling — I have done with Time.

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Ang. Alas!
And I have been the cause, the unconscious cause;
And for this funeral marriage, this black union,
Which thou, compliant with my father's wish,
Didst promise at *his* death, thou hast seal'd thine own.
Doge. Not so: there was that in my spirit ever
Which shaped out for itself some great reverse;
The marvel is, it came not until now —
And yet it was foretold me.
Ang. How foretold you?
Doge. Long years ago — so long, they are a doubt
In memory, and yet they live in annals:
When I was in my youth, and served the senate
And signory as podesta and captain
Of the town of Treviso, on a day
Of festival, the sluggish bishop who
Convey'd the Host aroused my rash young anger,
By strange delay, and arrogant reply
To my reproof; I raised my hand and smote him,
Until he reel'd beneath his holy burthen;
And as he rose from earth again, he raised
His tremulous hands in pious wrath towards heaven.
Thence pointing to the Host, which had fallen from him,
He turn'd to me, and said, "The hour will come
When he thou hast o'erthrown shall overthrow thee:
The glory shall depart from out thy house,
The wisdom shall be shaken from thy soul,
And in thy best maturity of mind
A madness of the heart shall seize upon thee;
Passion shall tear thee when all passions cease
In other men, or mellow into virtues;
And majesty, which decks all other heads,
Shall crown to leave thee headless; honours shall
But prove to thee the heralds of destruction,
And hoary hairs of shame, and both of death
But not such death as fits an aged man."
Thus saying, he pass'd on. — That hour is come.
Ang. And with this warning couldst thou not have striven
To avert the fatal moment, and atone,
By penitence for that which thou hadst done?
Doge. I own the words went to my heart, so much
That I remember'd them amid the maze
Of life, as if they form'd a spectral voice,
Which shook me in a supernatural dream;
And I repented; but 't was not for me
To pull in resolution: what must be

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I could not change, and would not fear.— Nay more,
Thou canst not have forgot, what all remember,
That on my day of landing here as Doge,
On my return from Rome, a mist of such
Unwonted density went on before
The bucentaur, like the columnar cloud
Which usher'd Israel out of Egypt, till
The pilot was misled, and disembark'd us
Between the pillars of Saint Mark's, where 't is
The custom of the state to put to death
Its criminals, instead of touching at
The Riva della Paglia, as the wont is, —
So that all Venice shudder'd at the omen.

Ang. Ah! little boots it now to recollect
Such things.

Doge. And yet I find a comfort in
The thought that these things are the work of Fate;
For I would rather yield to gods than men,
Or cling to any creed of destiny,
Rather than deem these mortals, most of whom
I know to be as worthless as the dust
And weak as worthless, more than instruments
Of an o'er-ruling power; they in themselves
Were all incapable — they could not be
Victors of him who oft had conquer'd for them!

Ang. Employ the minutes left in aspirations
Of a more healing nature, and in peace
Even with these wretches take thy flight to heaven.

Doge. I *am* at peace: the peace of certainty
That a sure hour will come, when their sons' sons,
And this proud city, and these azure waters,
And all which makes them eminent and bright,
Shall be a desolation and a curse,
A hissing and a scoff unto the nations,
A Carthage, and a Tyre, an Ocean Babel!

Ang. Speak not thus now; the surge of passion still
Sweeps o'er thee to the last; thou dost deceive
Thyself, and canst not injure them — be calmer.

Doge. I stand within eternity, and see
Into eternity, and I behold —
Ay, palpable as I see thy sweet face
For the last time — the days which I denounce
Unto all time against these wave-girt walls,
And they who are indwellers.

Guard (*coming forward*). Doge of Venice,
The Ten are in attendance on your highness.

Google

Doge. Then farewell, Angiolina! — one embrace —
Forgive the old man who hath been to thee
A fond but fatal husband — love my memory —
I would not ask so much for me still living,
But thou canst judge of me more kindly now,
Seeing my evil feelings are at rest.
Besides, of all the fruit of these long years,
Glory, and wealth, and power, and fame, and name,
Which generally leave some flowers to bloom
Even o'er the grave, I have nothing left, not even
A little love, or friendship, or esteem,
No, not enough to extract an epitaph
From ostentatious kinsmen; in one hour
I have uprooted all my former life,
And outlived every thing, except thy heart,
The pure, the good, the gentle, which will oft
With unimpair'd but not a clamorous grief
Still keep — Thou turn'st so pale! — Alas! she faints,
She has no breath, no pulse! — Guards! lend your aid —
I cannot leave her thus, and yet 't is better,
Since every lifeless moment spares a pang.
When she shakes off this temporary death,
I shall be with the Eternal.— Call her women —
One look! — how cold her hand! — as cold as mine
Shall be ere she recovers.— Gently tend her,
And take my last thanks —— I am ready now.

[*The Attendants of* ANGIOLINA *enter and surround their mistress, who has fainted.— Exeunt the* DOGE, *Guards*, &c. &c.

SCENE III.

The Court of the Ducal Palace: the outer gates are shut against the people.— The DOGE *enters in his ducal robes, in procession with the Council of Ten and other Patricians, attended by the Guards till they arrive at the top of the "Giants' Staircase," (where the Doges took the oaths); the Executioner is stationed there with his sword.— On arriving, a Chief of the Ten takes off the ducal cap from the Doge's head.*

Doge. So now the Doge is nothing, and at last
I am again Marino Faliero:
'T is well to be so, though but for a moment.

Google

Here was I crown'd, and here, bear witness, Heaven!
With how much more contentment I resign
That shining mockery, the ducal bauble,
Than I received the fatal ornament.
One of the Ten. Thou tremblest, Faliero!
Doge. 'T is with age, then. (1)
Ben. Faliero! hast thou aught further to commend,
Compatible with justice, to the senate?
Doge. I would commend my nephew to their mercy,
My consort to their justice; for methinks
My death, and such a death, might settle all
Between the state and me.
Ben. They shall be cared for;
Even notwithstanding thine unheard-of crime.
Doge. Unheard of! ay, there 's not a history
But shows a thousand crown'd conspirators
Against the people; but to set them free
One sovereign only died, and one is dying.
Ben. And who were they who fell in such a cause?
Doge. The King of Sparta, and the Doge of Venice —
Agis and Faliero!
Ben. Hast thou more
To utter or to do?
Doge. May I speak?
Ben. Thou may'st;
But recollect the people are without,
Beyond the compass of the human voice.
Doge. I speak to Time and to Eternity,
Of which I grow a portion, not to man.
Ye elements! in which to be resolved
I hasten, let my voice be as a spirit
Upon you! Ye blue waves! which bore my banner,
Ye winds! which flutter'd o'er as if you loved it,
And fill'd my swelling sails as they were wafted
To many a triumph! Thou, my native earth,
Which I have bled for, and thou foreign earth,
Which drank this willing blood from many a wound!
Ye stones, in which my gore will not sink, but
Reek up to Heaven! Ye skies, which will receive it!

(1) This was the actual reply of Bailli, maire of Paris, to a Frenchman who made him the same reproach on his way to execution, in the earliest part of their revolution. I find in reading over (since the completion of this tragedy), for the first time these six years, "Venice Preserved," a similar reply on a different occasion by Renault, and other coincidences arising from the subject. I need hardly remind the gentlest reader, that such coincidences must be accidental, from the very facility of their detection by reference to so popular a play on the stage and in the closet as Otway's chef-d'œuvre.

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Thou sun! which shinest on these things, and Thou!
Who kindlest and who quenchest suns! — Attest!
I am not innocent — but are these guiltless?
I perish'd, but not unavenged; far ages
Float up from the abyss of time to be,
And show these eyes, before they close, the doom
Of this proud city, and I leave my curse
On her and hers for ever! — Yes, the hours
Are silently engendering of the day,
When she, who built 'gainst Attila a bulwark,
Shall yield, and bloodlessly and basely yield
Unto a bastard Attila, without
Shedding so much blood in her last defence
As these old veins, oft drain'd in shielding her,
Shall pour in sacrifice.— She shall be bought
And sold, and be an appanage to those
Who shall despise her! — She shall stoop to be
A province for an empire, petty town
In lieu of capital, with slaves for senates,
Beggars for nobles, panders for a people! (1)
Then when the Hebrew's in thy palaces, (2)
The Hun in thy high places, and the Greek
Walks o'er thy mart, and smiles on it for his!
When thy patricians beg their bitter bread
In narrow streets, and in their shameful need
Make their nobility a plea for pity!
Then, when the few who still retain a wreck
Of their great fathers' heritage shall fawn
Round a barbarian Vice of Kings' Vicegerent,
Even in the palace where they sway'd as sovereigns,
Even in the palace where they slew their sovereign,
Proud of some name they have disgraced, or sprung
From an adulteress boastful of her guilt
With some large gondolier or foreign soldier,
Shall bear about their bastardy in triumph
To the third spurious generation; — when

(1) Should the dramatic picture seem harsh, let the reader look to the historical, of the period prophesied, or rather of the few years preceding that period. Voltaire calculated their "nostre bene merite Meretrici" at 12,000 of regulars, without including volunteers and local militia, on what authority I know not; but it is, perhaps, the only part of the population not decreased. Venice once contained 200,000 inhabitants: there are now about 90,000, and THESE!! few individuals can conceive, and none could describe, the actual state into which the more than infernal tyranny of Austria has plunged this unhappy city.

(2) The chief palaces on the Brenta now belong to the Jews; who in the earlier times of the republic were only allowed to inhabit Mestri, and not to enter the city of Venice. The whole commerce is in the hands of the Jews and Greeks, and the Huns form the garrison.

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Thy sons are in the lowest scale of being,
Slaves turn'd o'er to the vanquish'd by the victors,
Despised by cowards for greater cowardice,
And scorn'd even by the vicious for such vices
As in the monstrous grasp of their conception
Defy all codes to image or to name them;
Then, when of Cyprus, now thy subject kingdom,
All thine inheritance shall be her shame
Entail'd on thy less virtuous daughters, grown
A wider proverb for worse prostitution; —
When all the ills of conquer'd states shall cling thee,
Vice without splendour, sin without relief
Even from the gloss of love to smooth it o'er,
But in its stead, coarse lusts of habitude,
Prurient yet passionless, cold studied lewdness,
Depraving nature's frailty to an art; —
When these and more are heavy on thee, when
Smiles without mirth, and pastimes without pleasure,
Youth without honour, age without respect,
Meanness and weakness, and a sense of woe
'Gainst which thou wilt not strive, and dar'st not murmur
Have made thee last and worst of peopled deserts,
Then, in the last gasp of thine agony,
Amidst thy many murders, think of *mine!*
Thou den of drunkards with the blood of princes! (1)
Gehenna of the waters! thou sea Sodom!
Thus I devote thee to the infernal gods!
Thee and thy serpent seed!

[*Here the* DOGE *turns, and addresses the Executioner*

Slave, do thine office!
Strike as I struck the foe! Strike as I would
Have struck those tyrants! Strike deep as my curse!
Strike — and but once!

[*The* DOGE *throws himself upon his knees, and as the Executioner raises his sword the scene closes.*

SCENE IV.

The Piazza and Piazzetta of Saint Mark's.— The People in crowds gathered round the grated gates of the Ducal Palace, which are shut.

First Citizen. I have gain'd the gate, and can discern the Ten,
Robed in their gowns of state, ranged round the Doge.

(1) Of the first fifty Doges, *five* abdicated — *five* were banished with their eyes

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Second Cit. I cannot reach thee with mine utmost effort.
How is it? let us hear at least, since sight
Is thus prohibited unto the people,
Except the occupiers of those bars.
First Cit. One has approach'd the Doge, and now they strip
The ducal bonnet from his head — and now
He raises his keen eyes to Heaven; I see
Them glitter, and his lips move — Hush! hush! — no,
'T was but a murmur — Curse upon the distance!
His words are inarticulate, but the voice
Swells up like mutter'd thunder; would we could
But gather a sole sentence!
Second Cit. Hush! we perhaps may catch the sound.
First Cit. 'T is vain,
I cannot hear him. — How his hoary hair
Streams on the wind like foam upon the wave!
Now — now — he kneels — and now they form a circle
Round him, and all is hidden — but I see
The lifted sword in air —— Ah! hark! it falls!
[*The People murmur.*
Third Cit. Then they have murder'd him who would have freed us.
Fourth Cit. He was a kind man to the commons ever.
Fifth Cit. Wisely they did to keep their portals barr'd.
Would we had known the work they were preparing
Ere we were summon'd here, — we would have brought
Weapons, and forced them!
Sixth Cit. Are you sure he's dead?
First Cit. I saw the sword fall — Lo! what have we here?

Enter on the Balcony of the Palace which fronts Saint Mark's Place, a CHIEF OF THE TEN, (1) *with a bloody sword. He waves it thrice before the People, and exclaims,*

"Justice hath dealt upon the mighty Traitor!"

---

put out — *five* were MASSACRED — and *nine* deposed: so that *nineteen* out of fifty lost the throne by violence, besides two who fell in battle: this occurred long previous to the reign of Marino Faliero. One of his more immediate predecessors, Andrea Dandolo, died of vexation. Amongst his successors, *Foscari*, after seeing his son repeatedly tortured and banished, was deposed, and died of breaking a blood-vessel, on hearing the bell of Saint Mark's toll for the election of his successor. Moroeini was impeached for the loss of Candia; but this was previous to his dukedom, during which he conquered the Morea, and was styled the Peloponnesian. Faliero might truly say, "Thou den of drunkards with the blood of princes!"

(1) "Un Capo de' Dieci" are the words of Sanuto's Chronicle.

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[*The gates are opened; the populace rush in towards the "Giants' Staircase," where the execution has taken place. The foremost of them exclaims to those behind,*

The gory head rolls down the "Giants' Steps!"

[*The curtain falls.*

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APPENDIX.

I.

MCCCLIV.

MARINO FALIERO DOGE XLIX.

" Fu eletto daquarant uno Elettori, il quale era Cavaliere e conte di Valdemarino in Trivigiana, ed era ricco, e si trovava ambasciadore a Roma. E a dì 9, di Settembre, dopo sepolto il suo predecessore, fu chiamato il gran Consiglio, e fu preso di fare il Doge giusta il solito. E furono fatti i cinque Correttori, Ser Bernardo Giustiniani Procuratore, Ser Paolo Loredano, Ser Filippo Aurio, Ser Pietro Trivisano, e Ser Tommaso Viadro. I quali a dì 10, misero queste correzioni alla promozione del Doge: che i Consigiieri non odano gli Oratori e Nunzi de' Signori, senza i Capi de' quaranta, ne possano rispondere ad alcuno, se non saranno quattro Consiglieri e cue Capi de' Quaranta. E che osservino la forma del suo Capitolare. E che Messer lo Doge si metta nella miglior parte, quando i giudici tra loro non fossero d'accordo. E ch' egli non possa far vendere i suoi imprestiti, salvo con legittima causa, e co voler di cinque Consiglieri, di due Capi de' Quaranta, e delle due parti del Consiglis de' Pregati. *Item*, che in luogo di tre mila pelli di Conigli, che debbon dare i Zaratini per regalla al Doge, non trovandosi tante pelli, gli, diano Ducati ottanta l' anno. E poi a dì 11, detto, misero, *etiam* altre correzioni, che se il Doge, che sarà eletto, fosse fuori di Venezia, i savj possano provvedere del suo ritorno. E quando fosse il Doge ammalato, sia Vicedoge uno de' Consiglieri, da essere eletto tra loro. E che il detto sia nominato Viceluogotenente di Messer, lo Doge, quando i giudici faranno i suoi atti. E nota, perché fu fatto Doge uno, ch' era assente, che fu Vicedoge Ser Marino Badoero più vecchio de' Consiglieri. *Item*, che il governo del Ducato sia commesso a' Consiglieri, e a' Capi de' Quaranta, quando vacherà il Ducato finchè sarà eletto l' altro Doge. E cosi a dì 11 di Settembre fu creato il prefato Marino Faliero Doge. E fu preso, che il governo del Ducato sia commesso a' Consiglieri e a' Capi de' Quaranta. I quali stiano in Palazzo di continuo, fino che verrà il Doge. Sicchè di continuo stiano in Palazzo due Consiglieri e un Capo de' Quaranta. E subito furono spedite lettere al detto Doge, il quale era a Roma Oratore al Legato di Papa Innocenzo VI. ch' era in Avignone. Fu preso nel gran Consiglio d' eleggere dodici ambasciadori incontro a Marino Faliero Doge, il quale veniva da Roma. E giunto a Chioggia, il Podesta mandò Taddeo Giustiniani suo figliuolo incontro, con quindici Ganzaruoli. E poi venuto a S. Clemente nel Bucintoro, venne un gran caligo, *adeo* che il Bucintoro non si potè levare. Laonde il Doge co' gentiluomini nelle piatte vennero di lungo in questa Terra a' 5 d' Ottobre del 1354. E dovendo smontare alla riva della Paglia per lo caligo andarono ad ismontare alla riva della Piazza in mezzo alle due colonne dove si fa la Giustizia, che fu un malissimo augurio. E a' 6, la mittina venne alla Chiesa di San Marco alla laudazione di quello. Era in questo tempo Cancellier Grande Messer Benintende. I quarantuno Elettori furono, Ser Giovanni Contarini, Ser' Andrea Giustiniani, Ser Michele Morossini, Ser Simone Dandolo, Ser Pietro Lando, Ser Marino Gradenigo, Ser Marco Dolfino, Ser Nicolò Faliero, Ser Giovanni Quirini, Ser Lorenzo Soranzo, Ser Marco Bembo, Sere Stefano Belegno, Ser Francesco Loredano, Ser Marino Veniero, Ser Giovanni Mocenigo, Ser Andrea Barbaro, Ser Lorenzo Barbarigo, Ser Bettino da

Molino, Ser' Andrea Arizzo Procuratore, Ser Marco Celsi, Ser Paolo Donato, Ser Bertucci Grimani, Ser Pietro Steno, Ser Luca Duodo, Ser' Andrea Pisani, Ser Francesco Caravello, Ser Jacopo Trivisano, Sere Schiavo Marcello, Ser Maffeo Aimo, Ser Marco Capello, Ser Pancrazio Giorgio, Ser Giovanni Foscarini, Ser Tommaso Viadro, Sere Schiava Polani, Ser Marco Polo, Ser Marino Sagredo, Sere Stefano Mariani, Ser Francesco Suriano, Ser Orio Pasqualigo, Ser' Andrea Gritti, Ser Buono da Mosto.

" *Trattato di Messer Marino Faliero Doge, tratto da una Cronica antica.* Essendo venuto il Giovedì della Caccia, fu fatta giusta il solito la Caccia. E a' que' tempi dopo fatta la Caccia s'andava in Palazzo del Doge in una di quelle sale, e con donne facevasi una festicciuola, dove si ballava fino alla prima compana, e veniva una colazione; la quale spesa faceva Messer lo Doge, quando v' era la Dogaressa. E poscia tutti andavano a casa sua. Sopra la qual festa, pare, che Ser Michele Steno, molto giovane e povero gentiluomo, ma ardito e astuto, il quale era innamorato in certa donzella della Dogaressa, essendo sul Solajo appresso le donne, facesse cert' atto non conveniente, *adeo* che il Doge comandò ch' e' fosse buttato giù dal Solajo. E così quegli scudieri del Doge lo spinsero giù di quel Solajo. Laonde a Ser Michele parve, che fossegli stata fatta troppo grande ignominia. E non considerando altramente il fine, ma sopra quella passione fornita la festa, e andati tutti via, quella notte egli andò, e sulla cadrega, dove sedeva il Doge nella Sala dell' Udienza (perchè allora i Dogi non tenevano panno di seta sopra la cadrega, ma sedevano in una cadrega di legno) scrisse alcune parole disoneste del Doge e della Dogaressa, cioè: *Marin Faliero dalla bella moglie: Altri la gode, ed egli la mantiene.* E la mattina furono vedute tali parole scritte. E parve una brutta cosa. E per la Signoria fu commessa lacosa agli Avvogadori del Comune con grande efficacia. I quali Avvogadori subito diedero taglia grande per veni e in chiaro della verità di chi avea scritto tal lettera. E *tandem* si seppe, che Michele Steno aveale scritte. E fu per li Quaranta preso di ritenerlo; e ritenuto confessò, che in quella passione d' essere stato, spinto giù dal Solajo, presente la sua amante, egli aveale scritte. Onde poi fu placitato nel detto Consiglio, e parve al Consiglio sì per rispetto all' età, come per la caldezza d'amore, di condannarlo a compiere due mesi in prigione serrato, e poi ch' e' fosse bandito di Venezia e dal distretto per un' anno. Per la qual condennagione tanto piccola il Doge ne prese grande sdegno, parendogli che non fosse stata fatta quella estimazione della cosa, che ricercava la sua dignità del Ducato. E diceva, ch' eglino doveano averlo fatto appiccare per la gola, o *saltem* bandirlo in perpetuo da Venezia. E perchè (quando dee succedere un' effetto è necessario che vi concorra la cangione a fare tal' effetto) era destinato, che a Messer Marino Doge fosse tagliata la testa, perciò occorse, che entrata la Quaresima il giorno dopo che fu condannato il detto Ser Michele Steno, un gentiluomo da Cà Barbaro, di natura collerico, andasse all' Arsenale, domandasse certe cose ai Padroni, ed era alla presenza de' Signori l'Ammiraglio dell' Arsenale. Il quale intesa la domanda, disse, che non si poteva fare. Quel gentiluomo venne a parole coll' Ammiraglio', e diedegli un pugno su un'occhio. E perchè avea un'anello in dito, coll' anello gli ruppe la pelle, e fece sangue. E l'Ammiraglio così battuto e insanguinato andò al Doge a lamentarsi, acciocchè il Doge facesse fare gran punizione contra il detto da Cà Barbaro: Il Doge disse: *Che vuoi che ti faccia? Guarda le ignominiose parole scritte di me, e il modo ch'è stato punito quel ribaldo di Michele Steno, che le scrisse. E quale stima hanno i Quaranta fatto della persona nostra?* Laonde l'Ammiraglio gli disse: *Messer lo Doge, se voi volete farvi Signore, e fare tagliare tutti questi becchi gentiluomini a pezzi, mi basta l'animo, dandomi voi ajuto, di farvi Signore di questa Terra. E allora voi potrete castigare tutti costoro.* Inteso questo, il Doge disse, *Come si può fare una simile cosa?* E così entrarono in ragionamento.

" Il Doge mandò a chiamere Ser Bertuccio Faliero suo nipote, il quale stava con lui in Palazzo, e entrarono in questa macchinazione. Ne si partirono di lì, che mandarono per Filippo Calendaro, uomo marittimo e di gran seguito, e per Bertuccio Israello, ingegnere e uomo astutissimo. E consigliatisi insieme diede ordine di chiamare alcuni altri. E così per alcuni giorni la notte si riducevano insieme in Palazzo in casa del Doge. E chiamarono a parte a parte altri, *videlicet* Niccolò Fagiuolo, Giovanni da Corfù, Stefano Fagiano, Niccolò dalle Bende, Niccolò Biondo, e Stefano Trivisano. E ordinò di fare sedici o diciassette Capi in diversi luoghi della Terra, i qualiavessero cadaun di loro quarant' uomini provvigionati, preparati, non dicendo a' detti suoi quaranta quello, che volessero fare. Ma che il giorno stabilito si mostrasse di far quistione tra loro in diversi luoghi, acciocchè il Doge facesse sonare a San Marco le campane, le quali non si possono suonare, s' egli nol comanda. E al suono delle campane questi sedici o diciassette co' suoi uomini venissero a San Marco alle strade, che buttano in Piazza. E così i nobili e primarj cittadini, che

venissero in Piazza, per sapere del romore ciò ch'era, li tagliassero a pezzi. E seguito, che fosse chiamato per Signore Messer Marino Faliero Doge. E fermate le cose tra loro, stabilito fu, che questo dovess' essere a' 15 d' Aprile del 1355 in giorno di Mercoledì. La quale macchinazione trattata fu tra loro tanto segretamente, che mai nè pure se ne sospettò, non che se ne sapesse cos' alcuna. Ma il Signor Iddio, che ha sempre ajutato questa gloriosissima città, e che per le santimonie e giustizie sue mai non l'ha abbandonata, ispirò a un Beltramo Bergamasco il quale fu messo Capo di quarant' uomini per uno de' detti congiurati (il quale intese qualche parola, sicchè comprese l'effeto, che doveva succedere, e il qual era di casa di Ser Niccolò Lioni di Santo Stefano) di an dare a dì **** d' Aprile a casa del detto Ser Niccolò Lioni. E gli disse ogni cosa dell' ordin dato. Il quale intese le cose rimase come morto; e intese molte particolarità, il detto Beltramo il pregò che lo tenesse segreto, e glielo disse, acciocchè il detto Ser Niccolò non si partisse di casa a dì 15, acciocchè egli non fosse morto. Ed egli volendo partirsi, il fece ritenere a suoi di casa, e serrarlo in una camera. Ed esso andò a casa di M. Giovanni Gradenigo Nasone, il quale fu poi Doge, che stava anch' egli a Santo Stefano; e dissegli la cosa. La quale parendogli, com'era, d'una grandissima importanza, tutti e due andarono a casa di Ser Marco Cornaro, che stava a San Felice. E dettogli il tutto, tutti e tre deliberarono di venire a casa del detto Ser Niccolò Lioni, ed esaminare il detto Beltramo. E quello esaminato, intese le cose, il fecero stare serrato. E andarono tutti é tre a San Salvatore in sacristia, emandorono i loro famigli a chiamare i Consiglieri, gli Avvogadori, i Capi de' Dieci, e que' del Consiglio. E ridotti insieme dissero loro le cose. I quali rimasero morti. E deliberarono di mandare pel detto Beltramo, e fattolo venire cautamente, ed esaminatolo, e verificate le cose, ancorchè ne sentissero gran passione, pure pensarono la provvisione. E mandarono pe' Capi de' Quaranta, pe' Signori di notte, pè Capi de' Sestieri, e pè Cinque della Pace. E ordinato, ch' eglino co' loro uomini trovassero degli altri buoni uomini, e mandassero a casa de' capi de' congiurati, *ut supra* mettessero loro le mani addosso. E tolsero i detti le Maestrerie dell' Arsenale, acciochè i provvisionati de' congiurati non potessero offenderli. E si ridussero in Palazzo verso la sera. Dove ridotti fecero serrare le porte della corte del Palazzo. E mandarono a ordinare al campanaro, che non sonasse le campane. E così fu eseguito, e messe le mani addosso a tutti i nominati di sopra, furonoque' condotti al Palazzo. E vedendo il Consiglio de' Dieci, che il Doge era nella cospirazione, presero di eleggere venti de' primarj della Terra, di giunta al detto Consiglio a consigliare, non però che potessero mettere palotta.

" I Consiglieri furono questi: Ser Giovanni Mocenigo, del Sestiero di San Marco; Ser Almorò Veniero da Santa Marina, del Sestiero di Castello; Ser Tommaso Viadro, del Sestiero di Caneregio; Ser Giovanni Sanudo, del Sestiero di Santa Croce; Ser Pietro Trivisano, del Sestiero di San Paolo; Ser Pantalione Barbo il Grande, del Sestiero d'Ossoduro. Gli Avvogadori del Comune furono Ser Zufredo Morosini, e Ser Orio Pasqualigo, e questi non ballottarono. Que' del Consiglio de' Dieci; furono: Ser Giovanni Marcello, Ser Tommaso Sanudo, e Ser Micheletto Dolfino, Capi del detto Consiglio de' Dieci; Ser Luca da Legge, e Ser Pietro da Mosto, Inquisitori del detto Consiglio: Ser Marco Polani, Ser Marino Veniero, Ser Lando Lombardo, Ser Nicoletto Trivisano da Sant' Angiolo. Questi elessero tra loro una Giunta, nella notte ridotti quasi sul romper del giorno, di venti nobili di Venezia de' migliori, de' più savj, e de' più antichi, per consultare, non però che mettessero pallottola. E non vi vollero alcuno da Cà Faliero. E cacciarono fuori del Consiglio Niccolò Faliero, e un' altro Niccolò Faliero, da San Tommaso, per essere della casata del Doge. E questa provigione di chiamare i venti della Giunta fu molto commendata per tutta la Terra. Questi furono i venti della Giunta, Ser Marco Giustiniani, Procuratore, Ser' Andrea Erizzo, Procuratore, Ser Lionardo, Giustiniani, Procuratore, Ser' Andrea Contarini, Ser Simone Dandolo, Ser Niccolò Volpe, Ser Giovanni Loredano, Ser Marco Diedo, Ser Giovanni Gradenigo, Ser' Andrea Cornaro, Cavaliere, Ser Marco Soranzo, Ser Rinieri da Mosto, Ser Gazano Marcello, Ser Marino Morosino, Sere Stefano Belegno, Ser Niccolò Lioni, Ser Filippo Orio, Ser Marco Trivisano, Ser Jacopo Bragadino, Ser Giovanni Foscarini. E chiamati questi venti nel Consiglio de' Dieci, fu mandato per Messer Marino Faliero Doge, il quale andava pel Palazzo con gran gente, gentiluomini, e altra buona gente, che non sapeano ancora come il fatto stava. In questo tempo fu condotto, preso, e legato, Bertuccio Israello, uno de' Capi del trattato per que' di Santa Croce, e ancora fu preso Zanello del Brin, Nicoletto di Rosa, e Nicoletto Alberto, il Guardiaga, e altri uomini da mare, e d' altre condizioni. I quali furono esaminati e trovato la verità del tradimento. A dì 16 d' Aprile fu sentenziato pel detto Consiglio de' Dieci, che Filippo Calandario, e Bertucci Israello fossero appic-

cati alle colonne rosse del balconate del Palazzo, nelle quali sta a vedere il Doge la festa della Caccia. E così furono appiccati con spranghe in bocca. E nel giorno seguente' questi furono condannati, Niccolò Zuccuolo, Nicoletto Blondo, Nicoletto Doro, Marco Giuda, Jacomello Dagolino, Nicoletto Fedele figliuolo di Filippo Calendaro, Marco Torello, detto Israello, Stefano Trivisano, cambiatore di Santa Margherita, Antonio dalle Bende. Furono tutti presi a Chioggia, che fuggivano, e dipoi in diversi giorni a due a due, ed a uno a uno, per sentenza fatta nel detto Consiglio de' Dieci, furono appiccati per la gola alle colonne, continuando dalle rosse del Palazzo, seguendo fin verso il Canale. E altri presi furono lasciati, perchè sentirono il fatto, ma non vi furono tal che fu dato loro ad intendere per questi capi, che venissero coll' arme, per prendere alcuni malfattori in servigio della Signoria, nè altro sapeano. Fu encora liberato Nicoletto Alberto, il Guardiaga, e Bartolommeo Ciriuola, e suo figliuolo, e molti altri, che non erano in colpa.

" E a dì 16 d' Aprile, giorno di Venerdì, fu sentenziato nel detto Consiglio de' Dieci, di tagliare la testa a Messer Marino Faliero Doge sul pato della scala di pietra, dove i Dogi giurano il primo sagramento, quando montano prima in Palazzo. E così serrato il Palazzo, la mattina seguente a ora di terza, fu tagliata la testa al detto Doge a dì 17 d' Aprile. E prima la berretta fu tolta di testa al detto Doge, avanti che venisse giù dalla scala. E compiuta la giustizia, pare che un Capo de' Dieci andasse alle Colonne del Palazzo sopra la Piazza, e mostrasse la spada insanguinata a tutti, dicendo: *E stata fatta la gran giustizia del Traditore.* E aperta la porta, tutti entrarono dentro con gran furia a vedere il Doge, ch' era stato iustiziato. E' da sapere, che a fare la detta giustizia non fu Ser Giovanni Sanudo il Consigliere, perchè era andato a casa per difetto della persona, sicchè furono quattordici soli, che ballottarono, cioè cinque Consiglieri, e nove del Consiglio de' Dieci. E fu preso, che tutti i beni del Doge fossero confiscati nel Comune, e così degli altri traditori. El fu conceduto al detto Doge pel detto Consiglio de' Dieci, ch' egli potesse ordinare del suo per ducati due mila. Ancora fu preso, che tutti i Consiglieri, e Avvogador del Comune, que' del Consiglio de' Dieci, e della Giunta, ch' erano stati a fare la detta sentenza del Doge, e d'altri, avessero licenza di portar' arme di dì e di notte in Venezia e da Grado fino a Gavarzere, ch' è sotto il Dogato, con due fanti in vita loro, stando i fanti con essi in casa al suo pane e al suo vino. E chi non avesse fanti, potesse dar tal licenza a' suoi figliuoli ovvero fratelli, due però e non piú. Eziandio fu data licenza dell' arme a quattro Notaj della Cancelleria, cioè della Corte Maggiore, che furono a prendere le deposizioni e inquisizioni, in perpetuo a loro soli, i quali furono Amadio, Nicoletto di Loreno, Steffanello, e Pietro de' Compostelli, Scrivani de' Signori di notte. Ed essendo stati impiccati i traditori, e tagliata la testa al Doge, rimase la Terra in gran riposo e quiete. E come in una cronica ho trovato, fu portato il corpo del Doge in una barca con otto doppieri a seppelire nella sua arca a San Giovanni e Paolo, la quale al presente è in quell' andito per mezzo la Chiesuola di Santa Maria della Pace, fatta fare pel Vescovo Gabriello di Bergamo, e un cassone di pietra con queste lettere: *Heic jacet Dominus Marinus Faletro Dux.* E nel gran Consiglio non gli è stato fatto alcun brieve, ma il luogo vacuo con lettere che dicono così: *Hic est locus Marini Faletro, decapitati pro criminibus.* E pare, che la sua casa fosse data alla Chiesa di Sant' Apostolo, la qual era quella grande sul ponte. *Tamen* vedo il contrario che è pure di Cà Faliero, o che i Faliери la ricuperassero con danari dalla Chiesa. Nè voglio restar di scrivere alcuni, che volevano, che fosse messo nel suo breve, cioè: *Marinus Faletro Dux, temeritas me cepit, pœnas lui, de capitatus pro criminibus.* Altri vi fecero un distico assai degno al suo merito, il quale è questo, da cessere posto su la sua sepoltura:

" Dux Venetum jacet heic, patriam qui prodere tentans,
Sceptra, decus, censum, perdidit, atque caput."

* * * * * * * * *

" Non voglio restar di scrivere quello che ho letto in una cronica, cioè, che Marino Faliero trovandosi Podestà e Capitano a Treviso, e dovendosi fare una processione, il vescovo stette troppo a far venire il Corpo di Cristo. Il detto Faliero era di tanta superbia e arroganza, che diede un buffetto al prefato Vescovo, per modo ch' egli quasi cadde in terra. Però fu permesso, che il Faliero perdette l'intelletto, e fece la mala morte, come ho scritto di sopra."

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II

MCCCLIV.

MARINO FALIERO, DOGE XLIX.

On the eleventh day of September, in the year of our Lord 1354, Marino Faliero was elected and chosen to be the Duke of the Commonwealth of Venice. He was Count of Valdemarino, in the Marches of Treviso, and a Knight, and a wealthy man to boot. As soon as the election was completed, it was resolved in the Great Council, that a deputation of twelve should be despatched to Marino Faliero, the Duke, who was then on his way from Rome; for when he was chosen, he was embassador at the court of the Holy Father, at Rome,—the Holy Father himself held his court at Avignon. When Messer Marino Faliero, the Duke, was about to land in this city, on the 5th day of October, 1354, a thick haze came on, and darkened the air; and he was enforced to land on the place of Saint Mark, between the two columns, on the spot where evil doers are put to death; and all thought that this was the worst of tokens.—Nor must I forget to write that which I have read in a chronicle. When Messer Marino Faliero was Podesta and Captain of Treviso, the bishop delayed coming in with the holy sacrament, on a day when a procession was to take place. Now, the said Marino Faliero was so very proud and wrathful, that he buffeted the bishop, and almost struck him to the ground: and, therefore, Heaven allowed Marino Faliero to go out of his right senses, in order that he might bring himself to an evil death.

When this Duke had held the dukedom during nine months and six days, he, being wicked and ambitious, sought to make himself Lord of Venice, in the manner which I have read in an ancient chronicle. When the Thursday arrived upon which they were wont to hunt the bull, the bull-hunt took place as usual; and, according to the usage of those times, after the bull-hunt had ended, they all proceeded unto the palace of the Duke, and assembled together in one of his halls; and they disported themselves with the women. And until the first bell tolled they danced, and then a banquet was served up. My Lord the Duke paid the expenses thereof, provided he had a Duchess, and after the banquet they all returned to their homes.

Now to this feast there came a certain Ser Michele Steno, a gentleman of poor estate and very young, but crafty and daring, and who loved one of the damsels of the Duchess. Ser Michele stood amongst the women upon the solajo; and he behaved indiscreetly, so that my Lord the Duke ordered that he should be kicked off the solajo; and the esquires of the Duke flung him down from the solajo accordingly. Ser Michele thought that such an affront was beyond all bearing; and when the feast was over, and all other persons had left the palace, he, continuing heated with anger, went to the hall of audience, and wrote certain unseemly words relating to the Duke and the Duchess, upon the chair in which the Duke was used to sit; for in those days the Duke did not cover his chair with cloth of sendal, but he sat in a chair of wood. Ser Michele wrote thereon:—"*Marin Falier, the husband of the fair wife; others kiss her, but he keeps her.*" In the morning the words were seen, and the matter was considered to be very scandalous; and the Senate commanded the Avogadori of the Commonwealth to proceed therein with the greatest diligence. A largess of great amount was immediately proffered by the Avogadori, in order to discover who had written these words. And at length it was known that Michele Steno had written them. It was resolved in the Council of Forty that he should be arrested; and he then confessed, that in the fit of vexation and spite, occasioned by his being thrust off the solajo in the presence of his mistress, he had written the words. Therefore the Council debated thereon. And the Council took his youth into consideration, and that he was a lover, and therefore they adjudged that he should be kept in close confinement during two months, and that afterwards he should be banished from Venice and the state during one year. In consequence of this merciful sentence the Duke became exceedingly wroth, it appearing to him, that the Council had not acted in such a manner as was required by the respect due to his ducal dignity; and he said that they ought to have condemned Ser Michele to be hanged by the neck, or at least to be banished for life.

Now it was fated that my Lord Duke Marino was to have his head cut off. And as it is necessary, when any effect is to be brought about, that the cause of such effect must happen, it therefore came to pass, that on the very day after sentence had been pronounced on Ser Michele Steno, being the first day of Lent, a gentleman of the house of Barbaro, a choleric gentleman, went to the arsenal, and required certain things of the masters of the galleys. This he did in the presence of the Admiral of the arsenal, and he, hearing the request, answered,—No it cannot be done. High words arose between the gentleman and the admiral, and the gentleman struck him with his fist just above the eye; and as he happened to have a ring on his finger, the ring cut the Admiral and drew blood. The Admiral, all bruised and bloody, ran straight to the Duke to complain, and with the intent of praying him to inflict some heavy punishment upon the gentleman of Cà Barbaro.—"What wouldst thou have me do for thee?" answered the Duke:—"think upon the shameful gibe which hath been written concerning me; and think on the manner in which they have punished that ribald Michele Steno, who wrote it; and see how the Council of Forty respect our person."—Upon this the Admiral answered,—"My Lord Duke, if you would wish to make yourself a prince, and to cut all those cuckoldy gentlemen to pieces, I have the heart, if you do but help me, to make you prince of all this state; and then you may punish them all."—Hearing this, the Duke said;—"How can such a matter be brought about?"—and so they discoursed thereon.

The Duke called for his nephew, Ser Bertuccio Faliero, who lived with him in the palace, and they communed about this plot. And, without leaving the place, they sent for Philip Calendaro, a seaman of great repute, and for Bertuccio Israello, who was exceedingly wily and cunning. Then taking counsel amongst themselves, they agreed to call in some others; and so, for several nights successively, they met with the Duke at home in his palace. And the following men were called in singly; to wit;—Niccolo Fagiuolo, Giovanni da Corfu, Stefano Fagiono, Niccolo dalle Bende, Niccolo Biondo, and Stefano Trivisano.—It was concerted that sixteen or seventeen leaders should be stationed in various parts of the City, each being at the head of forty men, armed and prepared; but the followers were not to know their destination. On the appointed day they were to make affrays amongst themselves here and there, in order that the Duke might have a pretence for tolling the bells of San Marco; these bells are never rung but by the order of the Duke. And at the sound of the bells, these sixteen or seventeen, with their followers, were to come to San Marco, through the steets which open upon the Piazza. And when the noble and leading citizens should come into the Piazza, to know the cause of the riot, then the conspirators were to cut them in pieces; and this work being finished, my Lord Marino Faliero the Duke was to be proclaimed the Lord of Venice. Things having been thus settled, they agreed to fulfil their intent on Wednesday, the fifteenth day of April, in the year 1355. So covertly did they plot, that no one ever dreamt of their machinations.

But the Lord, who hath always helped this most glorious city, and who, loving its righteousness and holiness, hath never forsaken it, inspired one Beltramo Bergamasco to be the cause of bringing the plot to light, in the following manner. This Beltramo, who belonged to Ser Niccolo Lioni of Santo Stefano, had heard a word or two of what was to take place; and so, in the before-mentioned month of April, he went to the house of the aforesaid Ser Niccolo Lioni, and told him all the particulars of the plot. Ser Niccolo, when he heard all these things, was struck dead, as it were, with affright. He heard all the particulars; and Beltramo prayed him to keep it all secret; and if he told Ser Niccolo, it was in order that Ser Niccolo might stop at home on the fifteenth of April, and thus save his life. Beltramo was going, but Ser Niccolo ordered his servants to lay hands upon him, and lock him up. Ser Niccolo then went to the house of Messer Giovanni Gradenigo Nasoni, who afterwards became Duke, and who also lived at Santo Stefano, and told him all. The matter seemed to him to be of the very greatest importance, as indeed it was; and they two went to the house of Ser Marco Conaro, who lived at San Fehce; and, having spoken with him, they all three then determined to go back to the house of Ser Niccolo Lioni, to examine the said Beltramo; and having questioned him, and heard all that he had to say, they left him in confinement. And then they all three went into the sacristy of San Salvatore, and sent their men to summon the Councillors, the Avogadori, the Capi de' Dieci, and those of the Great Council.

When all were assembled, the whole story was told to them. They were struck dead, as it were, with affright. They determined to send for Beltramo. He was brought in before them. They examined him, and ascertained that the matter was true; and, although they were exceedingly troubled, yet they determined upon

their measures. And they sent for the Capi de' Quarante, the Signori di Notte, the Capi de' Sestieri, and the Cinque della Pace; and they were ordered to associate to their men other good men and true, who were to proceed to the houses of the ringleaders of the conspiracy, and secure them. And they secured the foreman of the arsenal, in order that the conspirators might not do mischief. Towards nightfall they assembled in the palace. When they were assembled in the palace, they caused the gates of the quadrangle of the palace to be shut. And they sent to the keeper of the Bell-tower, and forbade the tolling of the bells. All this was carried into effect. The before-mentioned conspirators were secured, and they were brought to the palace; and, as the Council of Ten saw that the Duke was in the plot, they resolved that twenty of the leading men of the state should be associated to them, for the purpose of consultation and deliberation, but that they should not be allowed to ballot.

The counsellors were the following: Ser Giovanni Mocenigo, of the Sestiero of San Marco; Ser Almoro Veniero da Santa Marina, of the Sestiero of Castello; Ser Tomaso Viadro, of the Sestiero of Canaregio; Ser Giovanni Sanudo, of the Sestiero of Santa Croce; Ser Pietro Trivisano, of the Sestiero of San Paolo; Ser Pantalione Barbo il Grande, of the Sestiero of Ossoduro. The Avogadori of the Commonwealth were Zufredo Morosini, and Ser Orio Pasqualigo; and these did not ballot. Those of the Council of Ten were Ser Giovanni Marcello, Ser Tommaso Sanudo, and Ser Micheletto Dolfino, the heads of the aforesaid Council of Ten. Ser Luca da Legge, and Ser Pietro da Mosto, inquisitors of the aforesaid Council. And Ser Marco Polani, Ser Marino Veniero, Ser Lando Lombardo, and Ser Nicoletto Trivisano, of Sant' Angelo.

Late in the night, just before the dawning, they chose a junta of twenty noblemen of Venice from amongst the wisest, and the worthiest, and the oldest. They were to give counsel, but not to ballot. And they would not admit any one of Cà Faliero. And Niccolo Faliero, and another Niccolo Faliero, of San Tomaso, were expelled from the Council, because they belonged to the family of the Doge. And this resolution of creating the junta of twenty was much praised throughout the state. The following were the members of the junta of twenty:—Ser Marco Giustiniani, Procuratore, Ser Andrea Erizzo, Procuratore, Ser Lionardo Giustiniani, Procuratore, Ser Andrea Contarini, Ser Simone Dandolo, Ser Niccolo Volpe, Ser Giovanni Loredano, Ser Marco Diedo, Ser Giovanni Gradenigo, Ser Andrea Cornaro, Cavaliere, Ser Marco Soranzo, Ser Rinieri du Mosto, Ser Gazano Marcello, Ser Marino Morosini, Ser Stefano Belegno, Ser Nicolo Lioni, Ser Filippo Orio, Ser Marco Trivisano, Ser Jacopo Bragadino, Ser Giovanni Foscarini.

These twenty were accordingly called in to the Council of Ten; and they sent for my Lord Marino Faliero the Duke; and my Lord Marino was then consorting in the palace with people of great estate, gentlemen, and other good men, none of whom knew yet how the fact stood.

At the same time Bertuccio Israello, who, as one of the ringleaders, was to head the conspirators in Santa Croce, was arrested and bound, and brought before the Council. Zanello del Brin, Nicoletto di Roso, Nicoletto Alberto, and the Guardiaga, were also taken, together with several seamen, and people of various ranks. These were examined, and the truth of the plot was ascertained.

On the sixteenth of April, judgment was given in the Council of Ten, that Filippo Calendaro and Bertuccio Israello should be hanged upon the red pillars of the balcony of the palace, from which the Duke is wont to look at the bull-hunt: and they were hanged with gags in their mouths.

The next day the following were condemned:—Niccolo Zuccuolo, Niccoletto Blondo, Nicoletto Doro, Marco Giuda, Jacomello Dagolino, Nicoletto Fidele, the son of Filippo Calendaro, Marco Torello, called Israello, Stefano Trivisano, the money-changer of Santa Margherita, and Antonio dalle Bende. These were all taken at Chiozza, for they were endeavouring to escape. Afterwards, by virtue of the sentence which was passed upon them in the Council of Ten, they were hanged on successive days, some singly and some in couples, upon the columns of the palace, beginning from the red columns, and so going onwards towards the canal. And other prisoners were discharged, because, although they had been involved in the conspiracy, yet they had not assisted in it: for they were given to understand by some of the heads of the plot, that they were to come armed and prepared for the service of the state, and in order to secure certain criminals; and they knew nothing else. Nicoletto Alberto, the Guardiaga, and Bartolommeo Ciricolo and his son, and several others, who were not guilty, were discharged.

On Friday, the sixteenth day of April, judgment was also given, in the aforesaid Council of Ten, that my Lord Marino Faliero, the Duke, should have his head cut off, and that the execution should be done on the landing-place of the stone staircase,

where the Dukes take their oath when they first enter the palace. On the following day, the seventeenth of April, the doors of the palace being shut, the Duke had his head cut off, about the hour of noon. And the cap of estate was taken from the Duke's head before he came down stairs. When the execution was over, it is said that one of the Council of Ten went to the columns of the palace over against the place of St. Mark, and that he showed the bloody sword unto the people, crying out with a loud voice — "The terrible doom hath fallen upon the traitor!" — and the doors were opened, and the people all rushed in, to see the corpse of the Duke, who had been beheaded.

It must be known, that Ser Giovanni Sanudo, the councillor, was not present when the aforesaid sentence was pronounced; because he was unwell and remained at home. So that only fourteen balloted; that is to say, five councillors, and nine of the Council of Ten. And it was adjudged, that all the lands and chattels of the Duke, as well as of the other traitors, should be forfeited to the state. And, as a grace to the Duke, it was resolved in the Council of Ten, that he should be allowed to dispose of two thousand ducats out of his own property. And it was resolved, that all the councillors and all the Avogadori of the Commonwealth, those of the Council of Ten, and the members of the junta, who had assisted in passing sentence on the Duke and the other traitors, should have the privilege of carrying arms both by day and by night in Venice, and from Grado to Cavazere. And they were also to be allowed two footmen carrying arms, the aforesaid footmen living and boarding with them in their own houses. And he who did not keep two footmen might transfer the privilege to his sons or his brothers; but only to two. Permission of carrying arms was also granted to the four Notaries of the Chancery, that is to say, of the Supreme Court, who took the depositions; and they were Amedio, Nicoletto di Lorino, Steffanello, and Pietro de Compostelli, the secretaries of the Signori di Notte.

After the traitors had been hanged, and the Duke had had his head cut off, the state remained in great tranquillity and peace. And, as I have read in a Chronicle, the corpse of the Duke was removed in a barge, with eight torches, to his tomb in the church of San Giovanni e Paolo, where it was buried. The tomb is now in that aisle in the middle of the little church of Santa Maria della Pace, which was built by Bishop Gabriel of Bergamo. It is a coffin of stone, with these words engraven thereon: "*Heic jacet Dominus Marinus Faletro Dux.*"—And they did not paint his portrait in the hall of the Great Council: — but in the place where it ought to have been, you see these words — "*Hic est locus Marini Faletro, decapitati pro criminibus.*"—And it is thought that his house was granted to the church of Sant' Apostolo: it was that great one near the bridge. Yet this could not be the case, or else the family bought it back from the church; for it still belongs to Cà Faliero. I must not refrain from noting, that some wished to write the following words in the place where his portrait ought to have been, as aforesaid: — "*Marinus Faletro Dux, temeritas me cepit. Pœnas lui. decapitatus pro criminibus.*"—Others, also, indited a couplet, worthy of being inscribed upon his tomb.

> "Dux Venetum jacet heic, patriam qui prodere tentans,
> Sceptra, decus, censum, perdidit, atque caput."

[I am obliged for this excellent translation of the old chronicle to Mr. F. Cohen, to whom the reader will find himself indebted for a version that I could not myself (though after many years' intercourse with Italian,) have given by any means so purely and so faithfully.]

III.

"Al giovane Doge Andrea Dandolo succedette un vecchio, il quale tardi si pose al timon e della repubblica, ma sempre prima di quel, che facea d'uopo a lui, ed alla patria: egli è Marino Faliero, personaggio a me noto per antica dimestichezza. Falsa era l' opinione intorno a lui, giacchè egli si mostrò fornito più di corraggio che di senno. Non pago della prima dignità, entrò con sinistro piede nel pubblico Palazzo; imperciocchè questo Doge del Veneti, magistrato sacro in tutti i secoli, che dagli antichi fù sempre venerato qual nume in quella città l' altr' jeri fù decollato nel vestibolo dell' istesso Palazzo. Discorrerei fin dal principio le cause di un tale ·ento, e così vario, ed ambiguo non ne fosse il grido. Nessumo però lo scusa

tutti affermano, che egli abbia voluto cangiar qualche cosa nell' ordine della repubblica a lui trimandato dai maggiori. Che desiderava egli di più? Io sòn d' avviso, che egli abbia ottenuto ciò, che non si concedette a nessun altro: mentre adempiva gli ufficj di legato presso il Pontefice, e sulle rive del Rodano trattava la pace, che io prima di lui avevo indarno tentato di conchiudere, gli fù conferito l' onore del Ducato, che ne chiedeva, ne s' aspettava. Tornato in patria, pensò a quello, cui nessuno non pose mente giammai, e soffrì quello, che a niuno accadde mai di soffrire: giacchè in quel luogo celeberrimo, e chiarissimo, e bellissimo infra tutti quelli, che io vidi, ove i suoi antenati avevano ricevuti grandissimi onori in mezzo alle pompe trionfali, ivi egli fù trascinato in modo servile, e spogliato delle insegne ducali, perdette la testa, e macchiò col proprio sangue le soglie del tempio, l' atrio del Palazzo, e le scale marmoree rendute spesse volte illustri o dalle solenni festività, o dalle ostili spoglie. Hò notato il luogo, ora noto il tempo: è l' anno del Natale di Cristo 1355, fù il giorno 18 d' Aprile. Si alto è il grido sparso, che se alcuno esaminerà la disciplina, e le costumanze di quella città, e quanto mutamento di cose venga minacciato dalla morte di un sol uomo (quantunque molti altri, come narrano, essendo complici, o subirono l' istesso supplicio, o lo aspettano) si accorgerà, che nulla di più grande avvenne ai nostri tempi nella Italia. Tu forse qui attendi il mio giudizio: assolvo il popolo, se credere alla fama, benchè abbia potuto e castigare più mitemente, e con maggior dolcezza vendicare il suo dolore: ma non così facilmente, si modera un' ira giusta insieme, e grand in un numeroso popolo principalmente, nel quale il precipitoso, ed instabile volgo aguzza gli stimoli dell' irracondia con rapidi, e sconsigliati clamori. Compatisco, e nell' istesso tempo mi adiro con quell' infelice uomo, il quale adorno di un' insolito onore non so, che cosa si volesse negli estremi anni della sua vita: la calamità di lui diviene sempre più grave, perchè dalla sentenza contra di esso promulgata aperirà, che egli fù non solo misero, ma insano, e demente, e che con vane arti si usurpo per tanti anni una falsa fama di sapienza. Ammonisco i Dogi, i quali gli sucederano, che questo e un' esempio posto inanzi ai loro occhj, quale specchio nel quale veggano d' essere non Signori, ma Duci, anzi nemmeno Duci, ma onorati servi della Repubblica. Tu sta sano; e giacchè fluttuano le pubbliche cose, sforsiamosi di governar modestissimamente i privati nostri affari."

Levati. Viaggi di Petrarca, vol. iv. p. 323.

The above Italian translation from the Latin epistles of Petrarch, proves—

1stly, That Marino Faliero was a personal friend of Petrarch's: "antica dimestichezza," old intimacy, is the phrase of the poet.

2dly, That Petrarch thought that he had more courage than conduct, "più di *corraggio* che di senno."

3dly, That there was some jealousy on the part of Petrarch: for he says that Marino Faliero was treating of the peace, which he himself had "vainly attempted to conclude."

4thly, That the honour of the dukedom was conferred upon him, which he neither sought nor expected, "che nè chiedeva nè aspettava," and which had never been granted to any other in like circumstances, "ciò che non si concedette a nessun altro;" "a proof of the high esteem in which he must have been held."

5thly, That he had a reputation for *wisdom*, *only* forfeited by the last enterprise of his life, "si usurpò per tanti anni una falsa fama di sapienza."—"He had usurped for so many years a false fame of wisdom;" rather a difficult task, I should think. People are generally found out before eighty years of age, at least in a republic.

From these, and the other historical notes which I have collected, it may be inferred that Marino Faliero possessed many of the qualities, but not the success of a hero; and that his passions were too violent. The paltry and ignorant account of Dr. Moore falls to the ground. Petrarch says, "that there had been no greater event in his times," (*our times* literally), "nostri tempi," in Italy. He also differs from the historian in saying that Faliero was "on the banks of the *Rhone*," instead of at Rome, when elected; the other accounts say, that the deputation of the Venetian senate met him at Ravenna. How this may have been, it is not for me to decide, and is of no great importance. Had the man succeeded, he would have changed the face of Venice, and perhaps of Italy. As it is, what *are* they both?

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IV.

Extrait de l'ouvrage. — Histoire de la République de Venise, par P. Daru, de l'Académie Française, tom. v. liv. xxxv. p. 95, &c. Edition de Paris, MDCCCXIX.

" A ces attaques si fréquentes que le gouvernement dirigeait contre le clergé, à ces luttes établies entre les différens corps constitués, à ces entreprises de la masse de la noblesse contre les dépositaires du pouvoir, à toutes ces propositions d'innovation qui se terminaient toujours par des coups d'état ; il faut ajouter une autre cause, non moins propre à propager le mépris des anciennes doctrines, c' *était l'excès de la corruption.*

" Cette liberté de mœurs, qu'on avait long-temps vantée comme le charme principal de la société de Venise, était devenue un désordre scandaleux ; le lien du mariage était moins sacré dans ce pays catholique que dans ceux où les lois civiles et religieuses permettent de le dissoudre. Faute de pouvoir rompre le contrat, on supposait qu'il n'avait jamais existé, et les moyens de nullité, allégués avec impudeur par les époux, étaient admis avec la même facilité par des magistrats et par des prêtres également corrompus. Ces divorces colorés d'un autre nom devinrent si fréquents, que l'acte le plus important de la société civile se trouva de la compétence d'un tribunal d'exception, et que ce fut à la police de réprimer le scandale. Le conseil des dix ordonna, en 1782, que toute femme qui intenterait une demande en dissolution de mariage serait obligée d'en attendre le jugement dans un couvent que le tribunal désignerait.* Bientôt après il évoqua devant lui toutes les causes de cette nature.† Cet empiétement sur la jurisdiction ecclésiastique ayant occasionné des réclamations de la part de la cour de Rome, le conseil se réserva le droit de débouter les époux de leur demande ; et consentit à la renvoyer devant l'officialité, toutes les fois qu'il ne l'aurait pas rejetée.‡

" Il y eut un moment où sans doute le renversement des fortunes, la perte des jeunes gens, les discordes domestiques, déterminèrent le gouvernement à s'écarter des maximes qu'il s'était faites sur la liberté de mœurs qu'il permettait à ses sujets : on chassa de Venise toutes les courtisanes. Mais leur absence ne suffisait pas pour ramener aux bonnes mœurs toute une population élevée dans la plus honteuse licence, Le désordre pénétra dans l'intérieur des familles, dans les cloîtres ; et l'on se crut obligé de rappeler, d'indemniser même § des femmes qui surprenaient quelquefois d'importants secrets, et qu'on pouvait employer utilement à ruiner des hommes que leur fortune aurait pu rendre dangereux. Depuis, la licence est toujours allée croissant, et l'on a vu non seulement des mères trafiquer de la virginité de leurs filles, mais la vendre par un contrat, dont l'authenticité était garantie par la signature d'un officier public, et l'execution mise sous la protection des lois.‖

" Les parloirs des couvents où étaient renfermées les filles nobles, les maisons des courtisanes, quoique la police y entretint soigneusement un grand nombre de surveillans, étaient les seuls points de réunion de la société de Venise, et dans ces deux endroits si divers on était également libre. La musique, les collations, la galanterie, n'étaient pas plus interdites dans les parloirs que dans les casins. Il y avait un grand nombre de casins destinés aux réunions publiques, où le jeu était la principale occupation de la société. C'était un singulier spectacle de voir autour d'une table des personnes des deux sexes en masque, et de graves personnages en robe de magistrature, implorant le hasard, passant des angoisses du désespoir aux illusions de l'espérance, et cela sans proférer une parole.

" Les riches avaient des casins particuliers ; mais ils y vivaient avec mystère ; leurs femmes délaissées trouvaient un dédommagement dans la liberte dont elles jou-

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* Correspondance de M. Schlick, chargé d'affaires de France, dépêche du 24 Août, 1782.

† Ibid. Dépêche du 31 Août.

‡ Ibid. Dépêche du 3 Septembre, 1785.

§ Le décret de rappel les désignait sous le nom de *nostre benemerite meretrici*. On leur assigna un fonds et des maisons appelées *Case rampane*, d'où vient la dénomination injurieuse de *Carampane*.

‖ Mayer, *Description de Venise*, tom. ii. et M. Archenholtz *Tableau de l' Italie*, tom. i. chap. 2.

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issaient; la corruption des mœurs les avait privées de tout leur empire; on vient de parcourir toute l'histoire de Venise, et on ne les a pas vues une seule fois exercer la moindre influence."

V.

Extract from the History of the Republic of Venice, by P. Daru, Member of the French Academy, vol. v. b. xxxiv. p. 95, &c. Paris Edit. 1819.

"To these attacks, so frequently pointed by the government against the clergy,—to the continual struggles between the different constituted bodies,—to these enterprises carried on by the mass of the nobles against the depositaries of power,—to all those projects of innovation, which always ended by a stroke of state policy; we must add a cause not less fitted to spread contempt for ancient doctrines; *this was the excess of corruption.*

"That freedom of manners which had been long boasted of as the principal charm of Venetian society, had degenerated into scandalous licentiousness: the tie of marriage was less sacred in that Catholic country, than among those nations where the laws and religion admit of its being dissolved. Because they could not break the contract, they feigned that it had not existed; and the ground of nullity, immodestly alleged by the married pair, was admitted with equal facility by priests and magistrates, alike corrupt. These divorces, veiled under another name, because so frequent, that the most important act of civil society was discovered to be amenable to a tribunal of exceptions; and to restrain the open scandal of such proceedings became the office of the police. In 1782 the Council of Ten decreed, that every woman who should sue for a dissolution of her marriage should be compelled to await the decision of the judges in some convent, to be named by the court.* Soon afterwards the same council summoned all causes of that nature before itself.† This infringement on ecclesiastical jurisdiction having occasioned some remonstrance from Rome, the council retained only the right of rejecting the petition of the married persons, and consented to refer such causes to the holy office as it should not previously have rejected.‡

"There was a moment in which, doubtless, the destruction of private fortunes, the ruin of youth, the domestic discord occasioned by these abuses, determined the government to depart from its established maxims concerning the freedom of manners allowed the subject. All the courtesans were banished from Venice; but their absence was not enough to reclaim and bring back good morals to a whole people brought up in the most scandalous licentiousness. Depravity reached the very bosoms of private families, and even into the cloister; and they found themselves obliged to recall, and even to indemnify § women who sometimes gained possession of important secrets, and who might be usefully employed in the ruin of men whose fortunes might have rendered them dangerous. Since that time licentiousness has gone on increasing; and we have seen mothers, not only selling the innocence of their daughters, but selling it by a contract, authenticated by the signature of a public officer, and the performance of which was secured by the protection of the laws.‖

"The parlours of the convents of noble ladies, and the houses of the courtesans, though the police carefully kept up a number of spies about them, were the only assemblies for society in Venice; and in these two places, so different from each other, there was equal freedom. Music, collations, gallantry, were not more forbidden in the parlours than at the casinos. There were a number of casinos for the purpose of public assemblies, where gaming was the principal pursuit of the company. It was

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* Correspondence of M. Schlick, French chargé d'affaires. Despatch of 24th August, 1782.

† Ibid. Despatch, 31st August.

‡ Ibid. Despatch, 3d September, 1785.

§ The decree for their recall designates them as *nostre benemerite meretrici*. A fund and some houses, called *Case rampane*, were assigned to them; hence the opprobrious appellation of *Carampane*.

‖ Mayer, *Description of Venice*, vol. ii. and M. Archenholz, *Picture of Italy*, vol. i. chap. 2.

a strange sight to see persons of either sex masked, or grave personages in their magisterial robes, round a table, invoking chance, and giving way at one instant to the agonies of despair, at the next to the illusions of hope, and that without uttering a single word.

"The rich had private casinos, but they lived *incognito* in them; and the wives whom they abandoned found compensation in the liberty they enjoyed. The corruption of morals had deprived them of their empire. We have just reviewed the whole history of Venice, and we have not once seen them exercise the slightest influence."

From the present decay and degeneracy of Venice under the barbarians, there are some honourable individual exceptions. There is Pasqualigo, the last, and alas! *posthumous* son of the marriage of the Doges with the Adriatic, who fought his frigate with far greater gallantry than any of his French coadjutors in the memorable action off Lissa. I came home in the squadron with the prizes in 1811, and recollect to have heard Sir William Hoste, and the other officers engaged in that glorious conflict, speak in the highest terms of Pasqualigo's behaviour. There is the Abbate Morelli. There is Alvise Querini, who, after a long and honourable diplomatic career, finds some consolation for the wrongs of his country, in the pursuits of literature, with his nephew, Vittor Benzon, the son of the celebrated beauty, the heroine of "La Biondina in Gondoletta." There are the patrician poet Morosini, and the poet Lamberti, the author of the "Biondina," &c. and many other estimable productions; and, not least in an Englishman's estimation, Madame Michelli, the translator of Shakspeare. There are the young Dandolo, and the improvvisatore Carrer, and Giuseppe Albrizzi, the accomplished son of an accomplished mother. There is Aglietti, and, were there nothing else, there is the immortality of Canova. Cicognara, Mustoxithi, Bucati, &c. &c. I do not reckon, because the one is a Greek, and the others were born at least a hundred miles off, which, throughout Italy, constitutes, if not a *foreigner*, *at least a stranger* (*forestiere*).

VI.

Extrait de l'ouvrage — Histoire littéraire d'Italie, par P. L. Ginguéné, tom. ix. chap. xxxvi. p. 144. Edition de Paris, 1819.

"Il y a une prédiction fort singulière sur Venise: 'Si tu ne changes pas,' dit-elle à cette république altière, 'ta liberté, qui déjà s'enfuit, ne comptera pas un siècle après la millième année.'

"En faisant remonter l'époque de la liberté Vénitienne jusqu'à l'établissement du gouvernement sous lequel la république a fleuri, on trouvera que l'élection du premier Doge date de 697, et si l'on y ajoute un siècle après mille, c'est-à-dire onze cents ans, on trouvera encor que le sense de la prédiction est littéralement celui-ci: 'Ta liberté ne comptera pas jusqu'à l'an 1797.' Rappelez-vous maintenant que Venise a cessé d'être libre en l'an cinq de la République française, ou en 1799; vous verrez qu'il n'y eut jamais de prédiction plus précise et plus ponctuellement suivie de l'effet. Vous noterez donc comme très remarquables ces trois vers de l'Alamani, adressés à Venise, que personne pourtant n'a remarqués:

'Se non cangi pensier, l'un secol solo
Non conterà sopra 'l millesimo anno
Tua libertà, che va fuggendo a volo.'

Bien des prophéties ont passé pour telles, et bien des gens ont été appelés prophètes à meilleur marché."

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VII.

Extract from the Literary History of Italy, by P. L. Ginguéné, vol. ix. p. 144. Paris Edit. 1819.

"THERE is one very singular prophecy concerning Venice: 'If thou dost not change,' it says to that proud republic, 'thy liberty, which is already on the wing, will not reckon a century more than the thousandth year.'

"If we carry back the epocha of Venetian freedom to the establishment of the government under which the republic flourished, we shall find that the date of the election of the first Doge is 697; and if we add one century to a thousand, that is, eleven hundred years, we shall find the sense of the prediction to be literally this: 'Thy liberty will not last till 1797.' Recollect that Venice ceased to be free in the year 1796, the fifth year of the French republic; and you will perceive that there never was prediction more pointed, or more exactly followed by the event. You will, therefore, note as very remarkable the three lines of Alamanni, addressed to Venice, which, however, no one has pointed out:

'Se non cangi pensier, l'un secol solo
Non conterà sopra, 'l millesimo anno
Tua libertà, che va fuggendo a volo.'

Many prophecies have passed for such, and many men have been called prophets for much less."

If the Doge's prophecy seem remarkable, look to the above, made by Alamanni two hundred and seventy years ago.

THE author of "Sketches Descriptive of Italy," etc. one of the hundred tours lately published, is extremely anxious to disclaim a possible charge of plagiarism from "Childe Harold" and "Beppo." He adds, that still less could this presumed coincidence arise from "my conversation," as he had *repeatedly declined an introduction to me while in Italy*.

Who this person may be, I know not; but he must have been deceived by all or any of those who "repeatedly offered to introduce" him, as I have invariably refused to receive any English with whom I was not previously acquainted, even when they had letters from England. If the whole assertion is not an invention, I request this person not to sit down with the notion that he COULD have been introduced, since there has been nothing I have so carefully avoided as any kind of intercourse with his countrymen, — excepting the very few who were a considerable time resident in Venice, or had been of my previous acquaintance. Whoever made him any such offer was possessed of impudence equal to that of making such an assertion without having had it. The fact is, that I hold in utter abhorrence any contact with the travelling English, as my friend the Consul-General Hoppner, and the Countess Benzoni, (in whose house the Conversazione mostly frequented by them is held,) could amply testify, were it worth while. I was persecuted by these tourists even to my riding ground at Lido, and reduced to the most disagreeable circuits to avoid them. At Madame Benzoni's I repeatedly refused to be introduced to them; — of a thousand such presentations pressed upon one, I accepted two, and both were to Irish women.

I should hardly have descended to speak of such trifles publicly, if the impudence of this "sketcher" had not forced me to a refutation of a disingenuous and gratuitously impertinent assertion; — so meant to be, for what could it import to the reader to be told that the author "had repeatedly declined an introduction," even had it been true, which, for the reasons I have above given, is scarcely possible. Except Lords Lansdowne, Jersey, and Lauderdale; Messrs. Scott, Hammond, Sir Humphry Davy, the late M. Lewis, W. Bankes, Mr. Hoppner, Thomas Moore, Lord Kinnaird, his brother, Mr. Joy, and Mr. Hobhouse, I do not recollect to have exchanged a word with another Englishman since I left their country; and almost all these I had known before. The others — and God knows there were some hundreds — who bored me with letters or visits, I refused to have any communication with, and shall be proud and happy when that wish becomes mutual.

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SARDANAPALUS,

A TRAGEDY.

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TO

THE ILLUSTRIOUS GOETHE

A STRANGER

PRESUMES TO OFFER THE HOMAGE

OF A LITERARY VASSAL TO HIS LIEGE LORD,

THE FIRST OF EXISTING WRITERS,

WHO HAS CREATED

THE LITERATURE OF HIS OWN COUNTRY,

AND ILLUSTRATED THAT OF EUROPE.

THE UNWORTHY PRODUCTION

WHICH THE AUTHOR VENTURES TO INSCRIBE TO HIM

IS ENTITLED

SARDANAPALUS.

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PREFACE.

In publishing the following Tragedies I have only to repeat, that they were not composed with the most remote view to the stage.

On the attempt made by the Managers in a former instance, the public opinion has been already expressed.

With regard to my own private feelings, as it seems that they are to stand for nothing, I shall say nothing.

For the historical foundation of the following compositions the reader is referred to the Notes.

The Author has in one instance attempted to preserve, and in the other to approach, the "unities;" conceiving that with any very distant departure from them, there may be poetry, but can be no drama. He is aware of the unpopularity of this notion in present English literature; but it is not a system of his own, being merely an opinion, which, not very long ago, was the law of literature throughout the world, and is still so in the more civilised parts of it. But "nous avons changé tout cela," and are reaping the advantages of the change. The writer is far from conceiving that any thing he can adduce by personal precept or example can at all approach his regular, or even irregular predecessors: he is merely giving a reason why he preferred the more regular formation of a structure, however feeble, to an entire abandonment of all rules whatsoever. Where he has failed, the failure is in the architect, — and not in the art.

In this tragedy it has been my intention to follow the account of Diodorus Siculus; reducing it, however, to such dramatic regularity as I best could, and trying to approach the unities. I

therefore suppose the rebellion to explode and succeed in one day by a sudden conspiracy, instead of the long war of the history.

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DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

SARDANAPALUS, *King of Nineveh and Assyria*, &c.
ARBACES, *the Mede who aspired to the Throne.*
BELESES, *a Chaldean and Soothsayer.*
SALEMENES, *the King's Brother-in-law.*
ALTADA, *an Assyrian Officer of the Palace.*
PANIA.
ZAMES.
SFERO.
BALEA.

WOMEN.

ZARINA, *the Queen.*
MYRRHA, *an Ionian female Slave, and the Favourite of* SARDANAPALUS.
Women composing the Harem of SARDANAPALUS, *Guards, Attendants, Chaldean Priests, Medes*, &c. &c.

Scene — a Hall in the Royal Palace of Nineveh.

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SARDANAPALUS.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

A Hall in the Palace.

Salemenes (*solus*). He hath wrong'd his queen, but still
he is her lord;
He hath wrong'd my sister, still he is my brother;
He hath wrong'd his people, still he is their sovereign,
And I must be his friend as well as subject:
He must not perish thus. I will not see
The blood of Nimrod and Semiramis
Sink in the earth, and thirteen hundred years
Of empire ending like a shepherd's tale;
He must be roused. In his effeminate heart
There is a careless courage which corruption
Has not all quench'd, and latent energies,
Repress'd by circumstance, but not destroy'd —
Steep'd, but not drown'd, in deep voluptuousness.
If born a peasant, he had been a man
To have reach'd an empire: to an empire born,
He will bequeath none; nothing but a name,
Which his sons will not prize in heritage: —
Yet, not all lost, even yet he may redeem
His sloth and shame, by only being that
Which he should be, as easily as the thing
He should not be and is. Were it less toil
To sway his nations than consume his life?
To head an army than to rule a harem?
He sweats in palling pleasure, dulls his soul,
And saps his goodly strength, in toils which yield not
Health like the chase, nor glory like the war —
He must be roused. Alas! there is no sound
[*Sound of soft music heard from within.*
To rouse him short of thunder. Hark! the lute,

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The lyre, the timbrel; the lascivious tinklings
Of lulling instruments, the softening voices
Of women, and of beings less than women,
Must chime in to the echo of his revel,
While the great king of all we know of earth
Lolls crown'd with roses, and his diadem
Lies negligently to be caught up
By the first manly hand which dares to snatch it.
Lo, where they come! already I perceive
The reeking odours of the perfumed trains,
And see the bright gems of the glittering girls,
At once his chorus and his council, flash
Along the gallery, and amidst the damsels,
As femininely garb'd, and scarce less female,
The grandson of Semiramis, the man-queen.—
He comes! Shall I await him? yes, and front him,
And tell him what all good men tell each other,
Speaking of him and his. They come, the slaves,
Led by the monarch subject to his slaves.

SCENE II.

Enter SARDANAPALUS *effeminately dressed, his Head crowned with Flowers, and his Robe negligently flowing, attended by a Train of Women and young Slaves.*

Sar. (*speaking to some of his attendants*). Let the pavilion over the Euphrates
Be garlanded, and lit, and furnish'd forth
For an especial banquet; at the hour
Of midnight we will sup there: see nought wanting,
And bid the galley be prepared. There is
A cooling breeze which crisps the broad clear river:
We will embark anon. Fair nymphs, who deign
To share the soft hours of Sardanapalus,
We 'll meet again in that the sweetest hour
When we shall gather like the stars above us,
And you will form a heaven as bright as theirs;
Till then, let each be mistress of her time,
And thou, my own Ionian Myrrha, (1) choose,
Wilt thou along with them or me?

(1) 'The Ionian name had been still more comprehensive, having included the Achaians and the Boeotians, who, together with those to whom it was afterwards confined, would make nearly the whole of the Greek nation; and among the orientals it was always the general name for the Greeks." — MITFORD'S *Greece*, vol. i. p. 199.

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Myr. My lord ——
Sar. My lord, my life! why answerest thou so coldly?
It is the curse of kings to be so answer'd.
Rule thy own hours, thou rulest mine — say, wouldst thou
Accompany our guests, or charm away
The moments from me?
Myr. The king's choice is mine.
Sar. I pray thee say not so: my chiefest joy
Is to contribute to thine every wish.
I do not dare to breathe my own desire,
Lest it should clash with thine; for thou art still
Too prompt to sacrifice thy thoughts for others.
Myr. I would remain: I have no happiness
Save in beholding thine; yet ——
Sar. Yet! what YET?
Thy own sweet will shall be the only barrier
Which ever rises betwixt thee and me.
Myr. I think the present is the wonted hour
Of council; it were better I retire.
Sal. (*comes forward and says*) The Ionian slave says well: let her retire.
Sar. Who answers? How now, brother?
Sal. The *queen's* brother,
And your most faithful vassal, royal lord.
Sar. (*addressing his train*). As I have said, let all dispose their hours
Till midnight, when again we pray your presence.
[*The court retiring.*
(*To* MYRRHA, *who is going*). Myrrha! I thought *thou* wouldst remain.
Myr. Great king,
Thou didst not say so.
Sar. But *thou* lookedst it:
I know each glance of those Ionic eyes,
Which said thou wouldst not leave me.
Myr. Sire! your brother ——
Sal. His *consort's* brother, minion of Ionia!
How darest *thou* name *me* and not blush?
Sar. Not blush!
Thou hast no more eyes than heart to make her crimson
Like to the dying day on Caucasus,
Where sunset tints the snow with rosy shadows,
And then reproach her with thine own cold blindness,
Which will not see it. What, in tears, my Myrrha?
Sal. Let them flow on; she weeps for more than one,
And is herself the cause of bitterer tears.

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Sar. Cursed be he who caused those tears to flow!
Sal. Curse not thyself — millions do that already.
Sar. Thou dost forget thee: make me not remember
I am a monarch.
Sal. Would thou couldst!
Myr. My sovereign,
I pray, and thou, too, prince, permit my absence.
Sar. Since it must be so, and this churl has check'd
Thy gentle spirit, go; but recollect
That we must forthwith meet: I had rather lose
An empire than thy presence.
[*Exit* MYRRHA.
Sal. It may be,
Thou wilt lose both, and both for ever!
Sar. Brother,
I can at least command myself, who listen
To language such as this: yet urge me not
Beyond my easy nature.
Sal. 'T is beyond
That easy, far too easy, idle nature,
Which I would urge thee. O that I could rouse thee!
Though 't were against myself.
Sar. By the god Baal!
The man would make me tyrant.
Sal. So thou art.
Think'st thou there is no tyranny but that
Of blood and chains? the despotism of vice —
The weakness and the wickedness of luxury –
The negligence — the apathy — the evils
Of sensual sloth — produce ten thousand tyrants,
Whose delegated cruelty surpasses
The worst acts of one energetic master,
However harsh and hard in his own bearing.
The false and fond examples of thy lusts
Corrupt no less than they oppress, and sap
In the same moment all thy pageant power
And those who should sustain it; so that whether
A foreign foe invade, or civil broil
Distract within, both will alike prove fatal:
The first thy subjects have no heart to conquer;
The last they rather would assist than vanquish.
Sar. Why, what makes thee the mouth-piece of the people?
Sal. Forgiveness of the queen, my sister's wrongs;
A natural love unto my infant nephews;
Faith to the king, a faith he may need shortly,

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In more than words; respect for Nimrod's line;
Also, another thing thou knowest not.
Sar. What's that?
Sal. To thee an unknown word.
Sar. Yet speak it;
I love to learn.
Sal. Virtue.
Sar. Not know the word!
Never was word yet rung so in my ears —
Worse than the rabble's shout, or splitting trumpet:
I 've heard thy sister talk of nothing else.
Sal. To change the irksome theme, then, hear of vice.
Sar. From whom?
Sal. Even from the winds, if thou couldst listen
Unto the echoes of the nation's voice.
Sar. Come, I 'm indulgent, as thou knowest, patient,
As thou hast often proved — speak out, what moves thee?
Sal. Thy peril.
Sar. Say on.
Sal. Thus, then: all the nations,
For they are many, whom thy father left
In heritage, are loud in wrath against thee.
Sar. 'Gainst *me!* What would the slaves?
Sal. A king.
Sar. And what
Am I then?
Sal. In their eyes a nothing; but
In mine a man who might be something still.
Sar. The railing drunkards! why, what would they have?
Have they not peace and plenty?
Sal. Of the first
More than is glorious; of the last, far less
Than the king recks of.
Sar. Whose then is the crime,
But the false satraps, who provide no better?
Sal. And somewhat in the monarch who ne'er looks
Beyond his palace walls, or if he stirs
Beyond them, 't is but to some mountain palace,
Till summer heats wear down. O glorious Baal!
Who built up this vast empire, and wert made
A god, or at the least shinest like a god
Through the long centuries of thy renown,
This, thy presumed descendant, ne'er beheld
As king the kingdoms thou didst leave as hero,
Won with thy blood, and toil, and time, and peril!

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For what? to furnish imposts for a revel,
Or multiplied extortions for a minion.
Sar. I understand thee — thou wouldst have me go
Forth as a conqueror. By all the stars
Which the Chaldeans read — the restless slaves
Deserve that I should curse them with their wishes,
And lead them forth to glory.
Sal. Wherefore not?
Semiramis — a woman only — led
These our Assyrians to the solar shores
Of Ganges.
Sar. 'T is most true. And *how* return'd?
Sal. Why, like a *man* — a hero; baffled, but
Not vanquish'd. With but twenty guards, she made
Good her retreat to Bactria.
Sar. And how many
Left she behind in India to the vultures?
Sal. Our annals say not.
Sar. Then I will say for them —
That she had better woven within her palace
Some twenty garments, than with twenty guards
Have fled to Bactria, leaving to the ravens,
And wolves, and men — the fiercer of the three,
Her myriads of fond subjects. Is *this* glory?
Then let me live in ignominy ever.
Sal. All warlike spirits have not the same fate.
Semiramis, the glorious parent of
A hundred kings, although she fail'd in India,
Brought Persia, Media, Bactria, to the realm
Which she once sway'd — and thou *might'st* sway.
Sar. I *sway* them —
She but subdued them.
Sal. It may be ere long
That they will need her sword more than your sceptre.
Sar. There was a certain Bacchus, was there not?
I 've heard my Greek girls speak of such — they say
He was a god, that is, a Grecian god,
An idol foreign to Assyria's worship,
Who conquer'd this same golden realm of Ind
Thou prat'st of, where Semiramis was vanquish'd.
Sal. I have heard of such a man; and thou perceiv'st
That he is deem'd a god for what he did.
Sar. And in his godship I will honour him —
Not much as man. What, ho! my cupbearer!
Sal. What means the king?
Sar. To worship your new god

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And ancient conqueror. Some wine, I say.

Enter Cupbearer.

Sar. (*addressing the Cupbearer*). Bring me the golden goblet thick with gems,
Which bears the name of Nimrod's chalice. Hence,
Fill full, and bear it quickly. [*Exit Cupbearer.*
Sal. Is this moment
A fitting one for the resumption of
Thy yet unslept-off revels?

Re-enter Cupbearer, with wine.

Sar. (*taking the cup from him*). Noble kinsman,
If these barbarian Greeks of the far shores
And skirts of these our realms lie not, this Bacchus
Conquer'd the whole of India, did he not?
Sal. He did, and thence was deem'd a deity.
Sar. Not so: — of all his conquests a few columns,
Which may be his, and might be mine, if I
Thought them worth purchase and conveyance, are
The landmarks of the seas of gore he shed,
The realms he wasted, and the hearts he broke.
But here, here in this goblet is his title
To immortality — the immortal grape
From which he first express'd the soul, and gave
To gladden that of man, as some atonement
For the victorious mischiefs he had done.
Had it not been for this, he would have been
A mortal still in name as in his grave;
And, like my ancestor Semiramis,
A sort of semi-glorious human monster.
Here's that which deified him — let it now
Humanise thee; my surly, chiding brother,
Pledge me to the Greek god!
Sal. For all thy realms
I would not so blaspheme our country's creed.
Sar. That is to say, thou thinkest him a hero,
That he shed blood by oceans; and no god,
Because he turn'd a fruit to an enchantment,
Which cheers the sad, revives the old, inspires
The young, makes weariness forget his toil,
And fear her danger; opens a new world
When this, the present, palls. Well, then *I* pledge thee
And *him* as a true man, who did his utmost

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In good or evil to surprise mankind. [*Drinks.*

Sal. Wilt thou resume a revel at this hour?

Sar. And if I did, 't were better than a trophy,
Being bought without a tear. But that is not
My present purpose: since thou wilt not pledge me,
Continue what thou pleasest.
(*To the Cupbearer*). Boy, retire.
[*Exit Cupbearer.*

Sal. I would but have recall'd thee from thy dream;
Better by me awaken'd than rebellion.

Sar. Who should rebel? or why? what cause? pretext?
I am the lawful king, descended from
A race of kings who knew no predecessors.
What have I done to thee, or to the people,
That thou shouldst rail, or they rise up against me?

Sal. Of what thou hast done to me, I speak not.

Sar. But
Thou think'st that I have wrong'd the queen: is 't not so?

Sal. Think! Thou hast wrong'd her!

Sar. Patience, prince, and hear me.
She has all power and splendour of her station,
Respect, the tutelage of Assyria's heirs,
The homage and the appanage of sovereignty.
I married her as monarchs wed — for state,
And loved her as most husbands love their wives.
If she or thou supposedst I could link me
Like a Chaldean peasant to his mate,
Ye knew nor me, nor monarchs, nor mankind.

Sal. I pray thee, change the theme: my blood disdains
Complaint, and Salemenes' sister seeks not
Reluctant love even from Assyria's lord!
Nor would she deign to accept divided passion
With foreign strumpets and Ionian slaves.
The queen is silent.

Sar. And why not her brother?

Sal. I only echo thee the voice of empires,
Which he who long neglects not long will govern.

Sar. The ungrateful and ungracious slaves! they murmur
Because I have not shed their blood, nor led them
To dry into the desert's dust by myriads,
Or whiten with their bones the banks of Ganges;
Nor decimated them with savage laws,
Nor sweated them to build up pyramids,
Or Babylonian walls.

Sal. Yet these are trophies

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More worthy of a people and their prince
Than songs, and lutes, and feasts, and concubines,
And lavish'd treasures, and contemned virtues.
Sar. Or for my trophies I have founded cities:
There 's Tarsus and Anchialus, both built
In one day — what could that blood-loving beldame,
My martial grandam, chaste Semiramis,
Do more, except destroy them?
Sal. 'T is most true;
I own thy merit in those founded cities,
Built for a whim, recorded with a verse
Which shames both them and thee to coming ages.
Sar. Shame me! By Baal, the cities, though well built,
Are not more goodly than the verse! Say what
Thou wilt 'gainst me, my mode of life or rule,
But nothing 'gainst the truth of that brief record.
Why, those few lines contain the history
Of all things human: hear — "Sardanapalus,
The king, and son of Anacyndaraxes,
In one day built Anchialus and Tarsus.
Eat, drink, and love; the rest 's not worth a fillip." (1)
Sal. A worthy moral, and a wise inscription,
For a king to put up before his subjects!

(1) 'For this expedition he took not only a small chosen body of the phalanx, but all his light troops. In the first day's march he reached Anchialus, a town said to have been founded by the king of Assyria, Sardanapalus. The fortifications, in their magnitude and extent, still in Arrian's time, bore the character of greatness, which the Assyrians appear singularly to have affected in works of the kind. A monument representing Sardanapalus was found there, warranted by an inscription in Assyrian characters, of course in the old Assyrian language, which the Greeks, whether well or ill, interpreted thus: 'Sardanapalus, son of Anacyndaraxes, in one day founded Anchialus and Tarsus. Eat, drink, play: all other human joys are not worth a fillip.' Supposing this version nearly exact (for Arrian says it was not quite so), whether the purpose has not been to invite to civil order a people disposed to turbulence, rather than to recommend immoderate luxury, may perhaps reasonably be questioned. What, indeed, could be the object of a king of Assyria in founding such towns in a country so distant from his capital, and so divided from it by an immense extent of sandy deserts and lofty mountains, and, still more, how the inhabitants could be at once in circumstances to abandon themselves to the intemperate joys which their prince has been supposed to have recommended, is not obvious: but it may deserve observation that, in that line of coast, the southern of Lesser Asia, ruins of cities, evidently of an age after Alexander, yet barely named in history, at this day astonish the adventurous traveller by their magnificence and elegance. Amid the desolation which, under a singularly barbarian government, has for so many centuries been daily spreading in the finest countries of the globe, whether more from soil and climate, or from opportunities for commerce, extraordinary means must have been found for communities to flourish there; whence it may seem that the measures of Sardanapalus were directed by juster views than have been commonly ascribed to him: but that monarch having been the last of a dynasty, ended by a revolution, obloquy on his memory would follow of course from the policy of his successors and their partisans.

"The inconsistency of traditions concerning Sardanapalus is striking in Diodorus's account of him." — *Mitford's Greece*, vol. ix. pp. 311, 312, and 313.

Sar. Oh, thou wouldst have me doubtless set up edicts —
"Obey the king — contribute to his treasure —
Recruit his phalanx — spill your blood at bidding —
Fall down and worship, or get up and toil."
Or thus — "Sardanapalus on this spot
Slew fifty thousand of his enemies.
These are their sepulchres, and this his trophy."
I leave such things to conquerors; enough
For me, if I can make my subjects feel
The weight of human misery less, and glide
Ungroaning to the tomb: I take no license
Which I deny to them. We all are men.
Sal. Thy sires have been revered as gods —
Sar. In dust
And death, where they are neither gods nor men.
Talk not of such to me! the worms are gods;
At least they banqueted upon your gods,
And died for lack of farther nutriment.
Those gods were merely men; look to their issue —
I feel a thousand mortal things about me,
But nothing godlike, unless it may be
The thing which you condemn, a disposition
To love and to be merciful, to pardon
The follies of my species, and (that 's human)
To be indulgent to my own.
Sal. Alas!
The doom of Nineveh is seal'd.— Woe — Woe
To the unrivall'd city!
Sar. What dost dread!
Sal. Thou art guarded by thy foes: in a few hours
The tempest may break out which overwhelms thee,
And thine and mine; and in another day
What *is* shall be the past of Belus' race.
Sar. What must we dread?
Sal. Ambitious treachery,
Which has environ'd thee with snares; but yet
There is resource: empower me with thy signet
To quell the machinations, and I lay
The heads of thy chief foes before thy feet.
Sar. The heads — how many?
Sal. Must I stay to number
When even thine own 's in peril? Let me go;
Give me thy signet — trust me with the rest.
Sar. I will trust no man with unlimited lives
When we take those from others, we nor know
What we have taken, nor the thing we give.

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Sal. Wouldst thou not take their lives who seek for thine?

Sar. That's a hard question — But I answer, Yes.
Cannot the thing be done without? Who are they
Whom thou suspectest? — Let them be arrested.

Sal. I would thou wouldst not ask me; the next moment
Will send my answer through thy babbling troop
Of paramours, and thence fly o'er the palace,
Even to the city, and so baffle all.—
Trust me.

Sar. Thou knowest I have done so ever:
Take thou the signet. [*Gives the signet.*

Sal. I have one more request.—

Sar. Name it.

Sal. That thou this night forbear the banquet
In the pavilion over the Euphrates.

Sar. Forbear the banquet! Not for all the plotters
That ever shook a kingdom! Let them come,
And do their worst: I shall not blench for them;
Nor rise the sooner; nor forbear the goblet;
Nor crown me with a single rose the less;
Nor lose one joyous hour. — I fear them not.

Sal. But thou wouldst arm thee, wouldst thou not, if needful?

Sar. Perhaps. I have the goodliest armour, and
A sword of such a temper; and a bow
And javelin, which might furnish Nimrod forth:
A little heavy, but yet not unwieldy.
And now I think on 't, 't is long since I 've used them.
Even in the chase. Hast ever seen them, brother?

Sal. Is this a time for such fantastic trifling? —
If need be, wilt thou wear them?

Sar. Will I not?
Oh! if it must be so, and these rash slaves
Will not be ruled with less, I 'll use the sword
Till they shall wish it turn'd into a distaff.

Sal. They say thy sceptre 's turn'd to that already?

Sar. That 's false! but let them say so: the old Greeks
Of whom our captives often sing, related
The same of their chief hero, Hercules,
Because he loved a Lydian queen: thou seest
The populace of all the nations seize
Each calumny they can to sink their sovereigns.

Sal. They did not speak thus of thy fathers.

Sar. No;

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They dared not. They were kept to toil and combat;
And never changed their chains but for their armour:
Now they have peace and pastime, and the license
To revel and to rail; it irks me not.
I would not give the smile of one fair girl
For all the popular breath that e'er divided
A name from nothing. What are the rank tongues
Of this vile herd, grown insolent with feeding,
That I should prize their noisy praise, or dread
Their noisome clamour?

Sal. You have said they are men;
As such their hearts are something.

Sar. So my dogs' are;
And better, as more faithful: — but, proceed;
Thou hast my signet: — since they are tumultuous,
Let them be temper'd, yet not roughly, till
Necessity enforce it. I hate all pain,
Given or received; we have enough within us,
The meanest vassal as the loftiest monarch,
Not to add to each other's natural burthen
Of mortal misery, but rather lessen,
By mild reciprocal alleviation,
The fatal penalties imposed on life:
But this they know not, or they will not know.
I have, by Baal! done all I could to soothe them:
I made no wars, I added no new imposts,
I interfered not with their civic lives,
I let them pass their days as best might suit them,
Passing my own as suited me.

Sal. Thou stopp'st
Short of the duties of a king; and therefore
They say thou art unfit to be a monarch.

Sar. They lie. — Unhappily, I am unfit
To be aught save a monarch; else for me
The meanest Mede might be the king instead.

Sal. There is one Mede, at least, who seeks to be so.

Sar. What mean'st thou! — 't is thy secret; thou desirest
Few questions, and I 'm not of curious nature.
Take the fit steps; and, since necessity
Requires, I sanction and support thee. Ne'er
Was man who more desired to rule in peace
The peaceful only: if they rouse me, better
They had conjured up stern Nimrod from his ashes,
"The mighty hunter." I will turn these realms
To one wide desert chase of brutes, who *were*,

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But *would* no more, by their own choice, be human.
What they have found me, they belie; *that which*
They yet may find me — shall defy their wish
To speak it worse; and let them thank themselves.
Sal. Then thou at last canst feel?
Sar. Feel! who feels not
Ingratitude?
Sal. I will not pause to answer
With words, but deeds. Keep thou awake that energy
Which sleeps at times, but is not dead within thee.
And thou may'st yet be glorious in thy reign,
As powerful in thy realm. Farewell!

[*Exit* SALEMENES.

Sar. (*solus*). Farewell!
He 's gone; and on his finger bears my signet,
Which is to him a sceptre. He is stern
As I am heedless; and the slaves deserve
To feel a master. What may be the danger,
I know not: he hath found it, let him quell it.
Must I consume my life — this little life —
In guarding against all may make it less?
It is not worth so much! It were to die
Before my hour, to live in dread of death,
Tracing revolt; suspecting all about me,
Because they are near; and all who are remote,
Because they are far. But if it should be so —
If they should sweep me off from earth and empire,
Why, what is earth or empire of the earth?
I have loved, and lived, and multiplied my image;
To die is no less natural than those
Acts of this clay! 'T is true I have not shed
Blood as I might have done, in oceans, till
My name became the synonyme of death —
A terror and a trophy. But for this
I feel no penitence; my life is love:
If I must shed blood, it shall be by force.
Till now, no drop from an Assyrian vein
Hath flow'd for me, nor hath the smallest coin
Of Nineveh's vast treasures e'er been lavish'd
On objects which could cost her sons a tear:
If then they hate me, 't is because I hate not:
If they rebel, 't is because I oppress not.
Oh, men! ye must be ruled with scythes, not sceptres,
And mow'd down like the grass, else all we reap
Is rank abundance, and a rotten harvest
Of discontents infecting the fair soil,

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Making a desert of fertility. —
I 'll think no more. —— Within there, ho!

Enter an Attendant.

Sar. Slave, tell
The Ionian Myrrah we would crave her presence.
Attend. King, she is here.

MYRRHA *enters.*

Sar. (*apart to Attendant*). Away!
(*Addressing* MYRRHA). Beautiful being!
Thou dost almost anticipate my heart;
It throbb'd for thee, and here thou comest: let me
Deem that some unknown influence, some sweet oracle,
Communicates between us, though unseen,
In absence, and attracts us to each other.
Myr. There doth.
Sar. I know there doth, but not its name:
What is it?
Myr. In my native land a God,
And in my heart a feeling like a God's,
Exalted; yet I own 't is only mortal;
For what I feel is humble, and yet happy —
That is, it would be happy; but ——
[MYRRHA *pauses.*
Sar. There comes
For ever something between us and what
We deem our happiness: let me remove
The barrier which that hesitating accent
Proclaims to thine, and mine is seal'd.
Myr. My lord! —
Sar. My lord — my king — sire — sovereign; thus it is —
For ever thus, address'd with awe. I ne'er
Can see a smile, unless in some broad banquet's
Intoxicating glare, when the buffoons
Have gorged themselves up to equality,
Or I have quaff'd me down to their abasement.
Myrrha, I can hear all these things, these names,
Lord — king — sire — monarch — nay, time was I prized them;
That is, I suffer'd them — from slaves and nobles
But when they falter from the lips I love,
The lips which have been press'd to mine, a chill
Comes o'er my heart, a cold sense of the falsehood

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Of this my station, which represses feeling
In those for whom I have felt most, and makes me
Wish that I could lay down the dull tiara,
And share a cottage on the Caucasus
With thee, and wear no crowns but those of flowers.
Myr. Would that we could!
Sar. And dost *thou* feel this? — Why?
Myr. Then thou wouldst know what thou canst never know.
Sar. And this is ——
Myr. The true value of a heart;
At least, a woman's.
Sar. I have proved a thousand —
A thousand, and a thousand.
Myr. Hearts?
Sar. I think so.
Myr. Not one! the time may come thou may'st.
Sar. It will.
Hear, Myrrha; Salemenes has declared —
Or why or how he hath divined it, Belus,
Who founded our great realm, knows more than I —
But Salemenes hath declared my throne
In peril.
Myr. He did well.
Sar. And say'st *thou* so?
Thou whom he spurn'd so harshly, and now dared
Drive from our presence with his savage jeers,
And made thee weep and blush?
Myr. I should do both
More frequently, and he did well to call me
Back to my duty. But thou spakest of peril —
Peril to thee ——
Sar. Ay, from dark plots and snares
From Medes — and discontented troops and nations.
I know not what — a labyrinth of things —
A maze of mutter'd threats and mysteries:
Thou know'st the man — it is his usual custom.
But he is honest. Come, we 'll think no more on 't —
But of the midnight festival.
Myr. 'T is time
To think of aught save festivals. Thou hast not
Spurn'd his sage cautions?
Sar. What? — and dost thou fear?
Myr. Fear? — I 'm a Greek, and how should I fear death?
A slave, and wherefore should I dread my freedom?

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Sar. Then wherefore dost thou turn so pale?
Myr. I love.
Sar. And do not I? I love thee far — far more
Than either the brief life or the wide realm,
Which, it may be, are menaced; — yet I blench not.
Myr. That means thou lovest nor thyself nor me;
For he who loves another loves himself,
Even for that other's sake. This is too rash:
Kingdoms and lives are not to be so lost.
Sar. Lost! — why, who is the aspiring chief who dared
Assume to win them?
Myr. Who is he should dread
To try so much? When he who is their ruler
Forgets himself, will they remember him?
Sar. Myrrha!
Myr. Frown not upon me: you have smiled
Too often on me not to make those frowns
Bitterer to bear than any punishment
Which they may augur.— King, I am your subject!
Master, I am your slave! Man, I have loved you! —
Loved you, I know not by what fatal weakness,
Although a Greek, and born a foe to monarchs —
A slave, and hating fetters — an Ionian,
And, therefore, when I love a stranger, more
Degraded by that passion than by chains!
Still I have loved you. If that love were strong
Enough to overcome all former nature,
Shall it not claim the privilege to save you?
Sar. *Save* me, my beauty! Thou art very fair,
And what I seek of thee is love — not safety.
Myr. And without love where dwells security?
Sar. I speak of woman's love.
Myr. The very first
Of human life must spring from woman's breast,
Your first small words are taught you from her lips,
Your first tears quench'd by her, and your last sighs
Too often breathed out in a woman's hearing,
When men have shrunk from the ignoble care
Of watching the last hour of him who led them.
Sar. My eloquent Ionian! thou speak'st music;
The very chorus of the tragic song
I have heard thee talk of as the favourite pastime
Of thy far father-land. Nay, weep not — calm thee.
Myr. I weep not — But I pray thee, do not speak
About my fathers or their land.
Sar. Yet oft

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Thou speakest of them.

Myr. True — true: constant thought
Will overflow in words unconsciously;
But when another speaks of Greece, it wounds me.

Sar. Well, then, how wouldst thou *save* me, as thou saidst?

Myr. By teaching thee to save thyself, and not
Thyself alone, but these vast realms, from all
The rage of the worst war — the war of brethren.

Sar. Why, child, I loathe all war, and warriors;
I live in peace and pleasure: what can man
Do more?

Myr. Alas! my lord, with common men
There needs too oft the show of war to keep
The substance of sweet peace; and, for a king,
'T is sometimes better to be fear'd than loved.

Sar. And I have never sought but for the last.

Myr. And now art neither.

Sar. Dost *thou* say so, Myrrha?

Myr. I speak of civic popular love, *self*-love,
Which means that men are kept in awe and law,
Yet not oppress'd — at least they must not think so;
Or if they think so, deem it necessary,
To ward off worse oppression, their own passions.
A king of feasts, and flowers, and wine, and revel
And love, and mirth, was never king of glory.

Sar. Glory! what 's that?

Myr. Ask of the gods thy fathers.

Sar. They cannot answer; when the priests speak for them,
'T is for some small addition to the temple.

Myr. Look to the annals of thine empire's founders.

Sar. They are so blotted o'er with blood, I cannot.
But what wouldst have? the empire *has been* founded.
I cannot go on multiplying empires.

Myr. Preserve thine own.

Sar. At least, I will enjoy it.
Come, Myrrha, let us on to the Euphrates:
The hour invites, the galley is prepared,
And the pavilion, deck'd for our return,
In fit adornment for the evening banquet,
Shall blaze with beauty and with light, until
It seems unto the stars which are above us
Itself an opposite star; and we will sit
Crown'd with fresh flowers like ——

Myr. Victims.

Sar. No, like sovereigns,

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The shepherd king of patriarchal times,
Who knew no brighter gems than summer wreaths,
And none but tearless triumphs. Let us on.

Enter PANIA.

Pan. May the king live for ever!
Sar. Not an hour
Longer than he can love. How my soul hates
This language, which makes life itself a lie,
Flattering dust with eternity. Well, Pania!
Be brief.
Pan. I am charged by Salemenes to
Reiterate his prayer unto the king,
That for this day, at least, he will not quit
The palace: when the general returns,
He will adduce such reasons as will warrant
His daring, and perhaps obtain the pardon
Of his presumption.
Sar. What! am I then coop'd?
Already captive? can I not even breathe
The breath of heaven? Tell prince Salemenes,
Were all Assyria raging round the walls
In mutinous myriads, I would still go forth.
Pan. I must obey, and yet —
Myr. Oh, monarch, listen. —
How many a day and moon thou hast reclined
Within these palace walls in silken dalliance,
And never shown thee to thy people's longing;
Leaving thy subjects' eyes ungratified,
The satraps uncontroll'd, the gods unworshipp'd,
And all things in the anarchy of sloth,
Till all, save evil, slumber'd through the realm!
And wilt thou not now tarry for a day, —
A day which may redeem thee? Wilt thou not
Yield to the few still faithful a few hours,
For them, for thee, for thy past father's race,
And for thy sons' inheritance?
Pan. 'T is true!
From the deep urgency with which the prince
Despatch'd me to your sacred presence, I
Must dare to add my feeble voice to that
Which now has spoken.
Sar. No, it must not be.
Myr. For the sake of thy realm!
Sar. Away!

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Pan. For that
Of all thy faithful subjects, who will rally
Round thee and thine.
Sar. These are mere fantasies;
There is no peril: — 'tis a sullen scheme
Of Salemenes, to approve his zeal,
And show himself more necessary to us.
Myr. By all that's good and glorious take this counsel.
Sar. Business to-morrow.
Myr. Ay, or death to-night.
Sar. Why let it come then unexpectedly
'Midst joy and gentleness, and mirth and love;
So let me fall like the pluck'd rose! — far better
Thus than be wither'd.
Myr. Then thou wilt not yield,
Even for the sake of all that ever stirr'd
A monarch into action, to forego
A trifling revel.
Sar. No.
Myr. Then yield for *mine*;
For my sake!
Sar. Thine, my Myrrha!
Myr. 'Tis the first
Boon which I ever ask'd Assyria's king.
Sar. That 's true, and wer 't my kingdom must be granted.
Well, for thy sake, I yield me. Pania, hence!
Thou hear'st me.
Pan. And obey. [*Exit* PANIA.
Sar. I marvel at thee.
What is thy motive, Myrrha, thus to urge me?
Myr. Thy safety; and the certainty that nought
Could urge the prince thy kinsman to require
Thus much from thee, but some impending danger.
Sar. And if I do not dread it, why shouldst thou?
Myr. Because *thou* dost not fear, I fear for *thee*.
Sar. To-morrow thou wilt smile at these vain fancies.
Myr. If the worst come, I shall be where none weep,
And that is better than the power to smile.
And thou?
Sar. I shall be king, as heretofore.
Myr. Where?
Sar. With Baal, Nimrod, and Semiramis,
Sole in Assyria, or with them elsewhere.
Fate made me what I am — may make me nothing —
But either that or nothing must I be;

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I will not live degraded.
Myr. Hadst thou felt
Thus always, none would ever dare degrade thee.
Sar. And who will do so now?
Myr. Dost thou suspect none?
Sar. Suspect! — that 's a spy's office. Oh! we lose
Ten thousand precious moments in vain words,
And vainer fears. Within there! — ye slaves, deck
The hall of Nimrod for the evening revel:
If I must make a prison of our palace,
At least we 'll wear our fetters jocundly;
If the Euphrates be forbid us, and
The summer dwelling on its beauteous border,
Here we are still unmenaced. Ho! within there!
[*Exit* SARDANAPALUS.
Myr. (*sola*). Why do I love this man? My country's daughters
Love none but heroes. But I have no country!
The slave hath lost all save her bonds. I love him;
And that's the heaviest link of the long chain —
To love whom we esteem not. Be it so:
The hour is coming when he 'll need all love,
And find none. To fall from him now were baser
Than to have stabb'd him on his throne when highest
Would have been noble in my country's creed:
I was not made for either. Could I save him,
I should not love *him* better, but myself;
And I have need of the last, for I have fallen
In my own thoughts, by loving this soft stranger:
And yet methinks I love him more, perceiving
That he is hated of his own barbarians,
The natural foes of all the blood of Greece.
Could I but wake a single thought like those
Which even the Phrygians felt when battling long
'Twixt Ilion and the sea, within his heart,
He would tread down the barbarous crowds, and triumph.
He loves me, and I love him; the slave loves
Her master, and would free him from his vices.
If not, I have a means of freedom still,
And if I cannot teach him how to reign,
May show him how alone a king can leave
His throne. I must not lose him from my sight. [*Exit.*

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ACT II.

SCENE 1.

The Portal of the same Hall of the Palace.

Beleses (*solus*). The sun goes down: methinks he sets more slowly,
Taking his last look of Assyria's empire.
How red he glares amongst those deepening clouds,
Like the blood he predicts. If not in vain,
Thou sun that sinkest, and ye stars which rise,
I have outwatch'd ye, reading ray by ray
The edicts of your orbs, which make Time tremble
For what he brings the nations, 'tis the furthest
Hour of Assyria's years. And yet how calm!
An earthquake should announce so great a fall —
A summer's sun discloses it. Yon disk,
To the star-read Chaldean, bears upon
Its everlasting page the end of what
Seem'd everlasting; but oh! thou true sun!
The burning oracle of all that live,
As fountain of all life, and symbol of
Him who bestows it, wherefore dost thou limit
Thy lore unto calamity? Why not
Unfold the rise of days more worthy thine
All-glorious burst from ocean? why not dart
A beam of hope athwart the future years,
As of wrath to its days? Hear me! oh, hear me!
I am thy worshipper, thy priest, thy servant —
I have gazed on thee at thy rise and fall,
And bow'd my head beneath thy mid-day beams,
When my eye dared not meet thee. I have watch'd
For thee, and after thee, and pray'd to thee,
And sacrificed to thee, and read, and fear'd thee,
And ask'd of thee, and thou hast answer'd — but
Only to thus much: while I speak, he sinks —
Is gone — and leaves his beauty, not his knowledge
To the delighted west, which revels in
Its hues of dying glory. Yet what is
Death, so it be but glorious? 'Tis a sunset;
And mortals may be happy to resemble
The gods but in decay.

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Enter ARBACES, *by an inner door.*

Arb. Beleses, why
So rapt in thy devotions? Dost thou stand
Gazing to trace thy disappearing god
Into some realm of undiscover'd day?
Our business is with night — 'tis come.
Bel. But not
Gone.
Arb. Let it roll on — we are ready.
Bel. Yes.
Would it were over!
Arb. Does the prophet doubt,
To whom the very stars shine victory?
Bel. I do not doubt of victory — but the victor.
Arb. Well, let thy science settle that. Meantime
I have prepared as many glittering spears
As will out-sparkle our allies — your planets.
There is no more to thwart us. The she-king,
That less than woman, is even now upon
The waters with his female mates. The order
Is issued for the feast in the pavilion.
The first cup which he drains will be the last
Quaff'd by the line of Nimrod.
Bel. 'Twas a brave one.
Arb. And is a weak one — 't is worn out — we 'll mend it.
Bel. Art sure of that?
Arb. Its founder was a hunter —
I am a soldier — what is there to fear?
Bel. The soldier.
Arb. And the priest, it may be: but
If you thought thus, or think, why not retain
Your king of concubines? why stir me up?
Why spur me to this enterprise? your own
No less than mine?
Bel. Look to the sky!
Arb. I look.
Bel. What seest thou?
Arb. A fair summer's twilight, and
The gathering of the stars.
Bel. And midst them, mark
Yon earliest, and the brightest, which so quivers,
As it would quit its place in the blue ether.
Arb. Well?
Bel. 'Tis thy natal ruler — thy birth planet.

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Arb. (*touching his scabbard*). My star is in this scabbard: when it shines,
It shall out-dazzle comets. Let us think
Of what is to be done to justify
Thy planets and their portents. When we conquer,
They shall have temples — ay, and priests — and thou
Shalt be the pontiff of — what gods thou wilt;
For I observe that they are ever just,
And own the bravest for the most devout.

Bel. Ay, and the most devout for brave — thou hast not
Seen me turn back from battle.

Arb. No; I own thee
As firm in fight as Babylonia's captain,
As skilful in Chaldea's worship: now,
Will it but please thee to forget the priest,
And be the warrior?

Bel. Why not both?

Arb. The better;
And yet it almost shames me, we shall have
So little to effect. This woman's warfare
Degrades the very conqueror. To have pluck'd
A bold and bloody despot from his throne,
And grappled with him, clashing steel with steel,
That were heroic or to win or fall;
But to upraise my sword against this silkworm,
And hear him whine, it may be ——

Bel. Do not deem it:
He has that in him which may make you strife yet;
And were he all you think, his guards are hardy,
And headed by the cool, stern Salemenes.

Arb. They 'll not resist.

Bel. Why not? they are soldiers.

Arb. True,
And therefore need a soldier to command them.

Bel. That Salemenes is.

Arb. But not their king.
Besides, he hates the effeminate thing that governs,
For the queen's sake, his sister. Mark you not
He keeps aloof from all the revels?

Bel. But
Not from the council — there he is ever constant.

Arb. And ever thwarted; what would you have more
To make a rebel out of? A fool reigning,
His blood dishonour'd, and himself disdain'd:
Why, it is *his* revenge we work for.

Bel. Could

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He but be brought to think so: this I doubt of.
Arb. What, if we sound him?
Bel. Yes — if the time served.

Enter BALEA.

Bal. Satraps! The king commands your presence at
The feast to-night.
Bel. To hear is to obey.
In the pavilion?
Bal. No; here in the palace.
Arb. How! in the palace? it was not thus order'd.
Bal. It is so order'd now.
Arb. And why?
Bal. I know not.
May I retire?
Arb. Stay.
Bel. (*to Arb. aside*). Hush! let him go his way.
(*Alternately to Bal.*) Yes, Balea, thank the monarch, kiss
the hem
Of his imperial robe, and say, his slaves
Will take the crums he deigns to scatter from
His royal table at the hour — was 't midnight?
Bal. It was: the place, the hall of Nimrod. Lords,
I humble me before you, and depart. [*Exit* BALEA.
Arb. I like not this same sudden change of place;
There is some mystery: wherefore should he change it?
Bel. Doth he not change a thousand times a day?
Sloth is of all things the most fanciful —
And moves more parasangs in its intents
Than generals in their marches, when they seek
To leave their foe at fault. — Why dost thou muse?
Arb. He loved that gay pavilion, — it was ever
His summer dotage.
Bel. And he loved his queen —
And thrice a thousand harlotry besides —
And he has loved all things by turns, except
Wisdom and glory.
Arb. Still — I like it not.
If he has changed — why, so must we: the attack
Were easy in the isolated bower,
Beset with drowsy guards and drunken courtiers;
But in the hall of Nimrod ——
Bel. Is it so?
Methought the haughty soldier fear'd to mount
A throne too easily — does it disappoint thee
To find there is a slipperier step or two

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Than what was counted on?
Arb. When the hour comes,
Thou shalt perceive how far I fear or no.
Thou hast seen my life at stake — and gaily play'd for —
But here is more upon the die — a kingdom.
Bel. I have foretold already — thou wilt win it:
Then on, and prosper.
Arb. Now were I a soothsayer,
I would have boded so much to myself.
But be the stars obey'd — I cannot quarrel
With them, nor their interpreter. Who 's here?

Enter SALEMENES.

Sal. Satraps!
Bel. My prince!
Sal. Well met — I sought ye both,
But elsewhere than the palace.
Arb. Wherefore so?
Sal. 'T is not the hour.
Arb. The hour! — what hour?
Sal. Of midnight.
Bel. Midnight, my lord!
Sal. What, are you not invited?
Bel. Oh! yes — we had forgotten.
Sal. Is it usual
Thus to forget a sovereign's invitation?
Arb. Why — we but now received it.
Sal. Then why here?
Arb. On duty.
Sal. On what duty?
Bel. On the state's.
We have the privilege to approach the presence;
But found the monarch absent.
Sal. And I too
Am upon duty.
Arb. May we crave its support?
Sal. To arrest two traitors. Guards! Within there!

Enter Guards.

Sa. (*continuing*). Satraps,
Your swords.
Bel. (*delivering his*). My lord, behold my scimitar.
Arb. (*drawing his sword*). Take mine.
Sal. (*advancing*). I will.
Arb. But in your heart the blade —

The hilt quits not this hand.
Sal. (*drawing*). How! dost thou brave me?
'T is well — this saves a trial, and false mercy.
Soldiers, hew down the rebel!
Arb. Soldiers! Ay —
Alone you dare not.
Sal. Alone! foolish slave —
What is there in thee that a prince should shrink from
Of open force? We dread thy treason, not
Thy strength: thy tooth is nought without its venom —
The serpent's, not the lion's. Cut him down.
Bel. (*interposing.*) Arbaces! Are you mad? Have I not render'd
My sword? Then trust like me our sovereign's justice.
Arb. No — I will sooner trust the stars thou prat'st of,
And this slight arm, and die a king at least
Of my own breath and body — so far that
None else shall chain them.
Sal. (*to the Guards*). You hear *him* and *me*.
Take him not, — kill.
[*The Guards attack* ARBACES, *who defends himself valiantly and dexterously till they waver.*
Sal. Is it even so; and must
I do the hangman's office? Recreants! see
How you should fell a traitor.
[SALEMENES *attacks* ARBACES.

Enter SARDANAPLUS *and Train.*

Sar. Hold your hands —
Upon your lives, I say. What, deaf or drunken?
My sword! O fool, I wear no sword: here, fellow,
Give me thy weapon. [*To a Guard.*
[SARDANAPALUS *snatches a sword from one of the soldiers, and rushes between the combatants — they separate.*
Sar. In my very palace!
What hinders me from cleaving you in twain,
Audacious brawlers?
Bel. Sire, your justice.
Sal. Or —
Your weakness.
Sar. (*raising the sword*). How?
Sal. Strike! so the blow 's repeated
Upon yon traitor — whom you spare a moment,
I trust, for torture — I'm content.

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Sar. What — him!
Who dares assail Arbaces?
Sal. I!
Sar. Indeed!
Prince, you forget yourself. Upon what warrant?
Sal. (*showing the signet*). Thine.
Arb. (*confused*). The king's!
Sal. Yes! and let the king confirm it.
Sar. I parted not from this for such a purpose.
Sal. You parted with it for your safety — I
Employ'd it for the best. Pronounce in person.
Here I am but your slave — a moment past
I was your representative.
Sal. Then sheathe
Your swords.
[ARBACES *and* SALEMENES *return their swords to the scabbards.*
Sal. Mine 's sheathed: I pray you sheathe *not* yours:
'T is the sole sceptre left you now with safety.
Sar. A heavy one; the hilt, too, hurts my hand.
(*To a Guard.*) Here, fellow, take thy weapon back.
Well, sirs,
What doth this mean?
Bel. The prince must answer that.
Sal. Truth upon my part, treason upon theirs.
Sar. Treason — Arbaces! treachery and Beleses!
That were an union I will not believe.
Bel. Where is the proof?
Sal. I 'll answer that, if once
The king demands your fellow-traitor's sword.
Arb. (*to Sal.*) A sword which hath been drawn as oft as thine
Against his foes.
Sal. And now against his brother,
And in an hour or so against himself.
Sar. That is not possible: he dared not; no —
No — I 'll not hear of such things. These vain bickerings
Are spawn'd in courts by base intrigues, and baser
Hirelings, who live by lies on good men's lives.
You must have been deceived, my brother.
Sal. First
Let him deliver up his weapon, and
Proclaim himself your subject by that duty,
And I will answer all.
Sar. Why, if I thought so — Google
But no, it cannot be: the Mede Arbaces —

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The trusty, rough, true soldier — the best captain
Of all who discipline our nations —— No,
I 'll not insult him thus, to bid him render
The scimitar to me he never yielded
Unto our enemies. Chief, keep your weapon.
Sal. (*delivering back the signet.*) Monarch, take back your signet.
Sar. No, retain it;
But use it with more moderation.
Sal. Sire,
I used it for your honour, and restore it
Because I cannot keep it with my own.
Bestow it on Arbaces.
Sar. So I should:
He never ask'd it.
Sal. Doubt not, he will have it,
Without that hollow semblance of respect.
Bel. I know not what hath prejudiced the prince
So strongly 'gainst two subjects, than whom none
Have been more zealous for Assyria's weal.
Sal. Peace, factious priest, and faithless soldier! thou
Unit'st in thy own person the worst vices
Of the most dangerous orders of mankind.
Keep thy smooth words and juggling homilies
For those who know thee not. Thy fellow's sin
Is, at the least, a bold one, and not temper'd
By the tricks taught thee in Chaldea.
Bel. Hear him,
My liege — the son of Belus! he blasphemes
The worship of the land, which bows the knee
Before your fathers.
Sar. Oh! for that I pray you
Let him have absolution. I dispense with
The worship of dead men; feeling that I
Am mortal, and believing that the race
From whence I sprung are — what I see them — ashes.
Bel. King! Do not deem so: they are with the stars,
And ——
Sar. You shall join them there ere they will rise,
If you preach farther — Why, *this* is rank treason.
Sal. My lord!
Sar. To school me in the worship of
Assyria's idols! Let him be released —
Give him his sword.
Sal. My lord, and king, and brother,
I pray ye pause.

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Sar. Yes, and be sermonised,
And dinn'd, and deafen'd with dead men and Baal,
And all Chaldea's starry mysteries.
Bel. Monarch! respect them.
Sar. Oh! for that — I love them:
I love to watch them in the deep blue vault,
And to compare them with my Myrrha's eyes;
I love to see their rays redoubled in
The tremulous silver of Euphrates' wave,
As the light breeze of midnight crisps the broad
And rolling water, sighing through the sedges
Which fringe his banks: but whether they may be
Gods, as some say, or the abodes of gods,
As others hold, or simply lamps of night,
Worlds, or the lights of worlds, I know nor care not.
There's something sweet in my uncertainty
I would not change for your Chaldean lore;
Besides, I know of these all clay can know
Of aught above it, or below it — nothing.
I see their brilliancy and feel their beauty —
When they shine on my grave I shall know neither.
Bel. For *neither*, sire, say *better*.
Sar. I will wait,
If it so please you, pontiff, for that knowledge.
In the mean time receive your sword, and know
That I prefer your service militant
Unto your ministry — not loving either.
Sal. (*aside*). His lusts have made him mad. Then must I save him,
Spite of himself.
Sar. Please you to hear me, Satraps!
And chiefly thou, my priest, because I doubt thee
More than the soldier; and would doubt thee all
Wert thou not half a warrior: let us part
In peace — I 'll not say pardon — which must be
Earn'd by the guilty; this I 'll not pronounce ye,
Although upon this breath of mine depends
Your own; and, deadlier for ye, on my fears.
But fear not — for that I am soft, not fearful —
And so live on. Were I the thing some think me,
Your heads would now be dripping the last drops
Of their attainted gore from the high gates
Of this our palace, into the dry dust,
Their only portion of the coveted kingdom
They would be crown'd to reign o'er — let that pass.
As I have said, I will not *deem* ye guilty,

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Nor *doom* ye guiltless. Albeit better men
Than ye or I stand ready to arraign you;
And should I leave your fate to sterner judges,
And proofs of all kinds, I might sacrifice
Two men, who, whatsoe'er they now are, were
Once honest. Ye are free, sirs.

Arb. Sire, this clemency ——

Bel. (*interrupting him*). Is worthy of yourself; and, al though innocent,
We thank ——

Sar. Priest! keep your thanksgivings for Belus;
His offspring needs none.

Bel. But being innocent ——

Sar. Be silent — Guilt is loud. If ye are loyal,
Ye are injured men, and should be sad, not grateful.

Bel. So we should be, were justice always done
By earthly power omnipotent; but innocence
Must oft receive her right as a mere favour.

Sar. That 's a good sentence for a homily,
Though not for this occasion. Prithee keep it
To plead thy sovereign's cause before his people.

Bel. I trust there is no cause.

Sar. No *cause*, perhaps;
But many causers: — if ye meet with such
In the exercise of your inquisitive function
On earth, or should you read of it in heaven
In some mysterious twinkle of the stars,
Which are your chronicles, I pray you note,
That there are worse things betwixt earth and heaven
Than him who ruleth many and slays none;
And, hating not himself, yet he loves his fellows
Enough to spare even those who would not spare him
Were they once masters — but that 's doubtful. Satraps!
Your swords and persons are at liberty
To use them as ye will — but from this hour
I have no call for either. Salemenes!
Follow me.

[*Exeunt* SARDANAPALUS, SALEMENES, *and the Train, &c. leaving* ARBACES *and* BELESES.

Arb. Beleses!

Bel. Now, what think you?

Arb. That we are lost.

Bel. That we have won the kingdom.

Arb. What? thus suspected — with the sword slung o'er us
But by a single hair, and that still wavering,

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To be blown down by his imperious breath
Which spared us — why, I know not.
Bel. Seek not why;
But let us profit by the interval.
The hour is still our own — our power the same —
The night the same we destined. He hath changed
Nothing except our ignorance of all
Suspicion into such a certainty
As must make madness of delay.
Arb. And yet ——
Bel. What, doubting still?
Arb. He spared our lives, nay, more,
Saved them from Salemenes.
Bel. And how long
Will he so spare? till the first drunken minute.
Arb. Or sober, rather. Yet he did it nobly;
Gave royally what we had forfeited
Basely ——
Bel. Say bravely.
Arb. Somewhat of both, perhaps.
But it has touch'd me, and, whate'er betide,
I will no further on.
Bel. And lose the world!
Arb. Lose any thing except my own esteem.
Bel. I blush that we should owe our lives to such
A king of distaffs!
Arb. But no less we owe them;
And I should blush far more to take the grantor's!
Bel. Thou may'st endure whate'er thou wilt, the stars
Have written otherwise.
Arb. Though they came down,
And marshall'd me the way in all their brightness,
I would not follow.
Bel. This is weakness — worse
Than a sacred beldam's dreaming of the dead,
And waking in the dark.— Go to — go to.
Arb. Methought he look'd like Nimrod as he spoke,
Even as the proud imperial statue stands
Looking the monarch of the kings around it,
And sways, while they but ornament, the temple.
Bel. I told you that you had too much despised him,
And that there was some royalty within him —
What then? he is the nobler foe.
Arb. But we
The meaner: — Would he had not spared us!
Bel. So —

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Wouldst thou be sacrificed thus readily?
Arb. No — but it had been better to have died
Than live ungrateful.
Bel. Oh, the souls of some men!
Thou wouldst digest what some call treason, and
Fools treachery — and, behold, upon the sudden,
Because for something or for nothing, this
Rash reveller steps, ostentatiously,
'Twixt thee and Salemenes, thou art turn'd
Into — what shall I say? — Sardanapalus!
I know no name more ignominious.
Arb. But
An hour ago, who dared to term me such
Had held his life but lightly — as it is,
I must forgive you, even as he forgave us —
Semiramis herself would not have done it.
Bel. No — the queen liked no sharers of the kingdom,
Not even a husband.
Arb. I must serve him truly ——
Bel. And humbly?
Arb. No, sir, proudly — being honest.
I shall be nearer thrones than you to heaven;
And if not quite so haughty, yet more lofty.
You may do your own deeming — you have codes,
And mysteries and corollaries of
Right and wrong, which I lack for my direction,
And must pursue but what a plain heart teaches.
And now you know me.
Bel. Have you finish'd?
Arb. Yes —
With you.
Bel. And would, perhaps, betray as well
As quit me?
Arb. That's a sacerdotal thought,
And not a soldier's.
Bel. Be it what you will —
Truce with these wranglings, and but hear me.
Arb. No —
There is more peril in your subtle spirit
Than in a phalanx.
Bel. If it must be so —
I 'll on alone.
Arb. Alone!
Bel. Thrones hold but one.
Arb. But this is fill'd.
Bel. With worse than vacancy —

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A despised monarch. Look to it, Arbaces:
I have still aided, cherish'd, loved, and urged you;
Was willing even to serve you, in the hope
To serve and save Assyria. Heaven itself
Seem'd to consent, and all events were friendly,
Even to the last, till that your spirit shrunk
Into a shallow softness; but now, rather
Than see my country languish, I will be
Her saviour or the victim of her tyrant,
Or one or both, for sometimes both are one;
And if I win, Arbaces is my servant.

Arb. *Your* servant!

Bel. Why not? better than be slave,
The *pardon'd* slave of *she* Sardanapalus!

Enter PANIA.

Pan. My lords, I bear an order from the king.

Arb. It is obey'd ere spoken.

Bel. Notwithstanding,
Let's hear it.

Pan. Forthwith, on this very night,
Repair to your respective satrapies
Of Babylon and Media.

Bel. With our troops?

Pan. My order is unto the satraps and
Their household train.

Arb. But ——

Bel. It must be obey'd:
Say, we depart.

Pan. My order is to see you
Depart, and not to bear your answer.

Bel. (*aside*). Ay!
Well, sir, we will accompany you hence.

Pan. I will retire to marshal forth the guard
Of honour which befits your rank, and wait
Your leisure, so that it the hour exceeds not.

[*Exit* PANIA.

Bel. *Now* then obey!

Arb. Doubtless.

Bel. Yes, to the gates
That grate the palace, which is now our prison —
No further.

Arb. Thou hast harp'd the truth indeed
The realm itself, in all its wide extension,
Yawns dungeons at each step for thee and me.

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Bel. Graves!
Arb. If I thought so, this good sword should dig
One more than mine.
Bel. It shall have work enough.
Let me hope better than thou augurest;
At present, let us hence as best we may.
Thou dost agree with me in understanding
This order as a sentence?
Arb. Why, what other
Interpretation should it bear? it is
The very policy of orient monarchs —
Pardon and poison — favours and a sword —
A distant voyage, and an eternal sleep.
How many satraps in his father's time —
For he I own is, or at least *was*, bloodless —
Bel. But *will* not, *can* not be so now.
Arb. I doubt it.
How many satraps have I seen set out
In his sire's day for mighty vice-royalties,
Whose tombs are on their path! I know not how,
But they all sicken'd by the way, it was
So long and heavy.
Bel. Let us but regain
The free air of the city, and we 'll shorten
The journey.
Arb. 'T will be shorten'd at the gates,
It may be.
Bel. No; they hardly will risk that.
They mean us to die privately, but not
Within the palace or the city walls,
Where we are known, and may have partisans:
If they had meant to slay us here, we were
No longer with the living. Let us hence.
Arb. If I but thought he did not mean my life ——
Bel. Fool! hence — what else should despotism alarm'd
Mean? Let us but rejoin our troops, and march.
Arb. Towards our provinces?
Bel. No; towards your kingdom.
There 's time, there 's heart, and hope, and power, and means,
Which their half measures leave us in full scope.—
Away!
Arb. And I even yet repenting must
Relapse to guilt!
Bel. Self-defence is a virtue,
Sole bulwark of all right. Away, I say!

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Let 's leave this place, the air grows thick and choking,
And the walls have a scent of night-shade — hence!
Let us not leave them time for further council.
Our quick departure proves our civic zeal
Our quick departure hinders our good escort,
The worthy Pania, from anticipating
The orders of some parasangs from hence:
Nay, there 's no other choice, but —— hence, I say.
[*Exit with* ARBACES, *who follows reluctantly.*

Enter SARDANAPALUS *and* SALEMENES.

Sar. Well, all is remedied, and without bloodshed,
That worst of mockeries of a remedy;
We are now secure by these men's exile.
Sal. Yes,
As he who tread on flowers is from the adder
Twined round their roots.
Sar. Why, what wouldst have me do?
Sal. Undo what you have done.
Sar. Revoke my pardon?
Sal. Replace the crown now tottering on your temples.
Sar. That were tyrannical.
Sal. But sure.
Sar. We are so.
What danger can they work upon the frontier?
Sal. They are not there yet — never should they be so,
Were I well listen'd to.
Sar. Nay, I *have* listen'd
Impartially to thee — why not to them?
Sal. You may know that hereafter; as it is,
I take my leave to order forth the guard.
Sar. And you will join us at the banquet?
Sal. Sire,
Dispense with me — I am no wassailer:
Command me in all service save the Bacchant's.
Sar. Nay, but 't is fit to revel now and then
Sal. And fit that some should watch for those who revel
Too oft. Am I permitted to depart?
Sar. Yes —— Stay a moment, my good Salemenes,
My brother, my best subject, better prince
Than I am king. You should have been the monarch,
And I — I know not what, and care not; but
Think not I am insensible to all
Thine honest wisdom, and thy rough yet kind,
Though oft reproving, sufferance of my follies.

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If I have spared these men against thy counsel,
That is, their lives — it is not that I doubt
The advice was sound; but, let them live: we will not
Cavil about their lives — so let them mend them.
Their banishment will leave me still sound sleep,
Which their death had not left me.
Sal. Thus you run
The risk to sleep for ever, to save traitors —
A moment's pang now changed for years of crime.
Still let them be made quiet.
Sar. Tempt me not:
My word is past.
Sal. But it may be recall'd.
Sar. 'Tis royal.
Sal. And should therefore be decisive.
This half indulgence of an exile serves
But to provoke — a pardon should be full,
Or it is none.
Sar. And who persuaded me
After I had repeal'd them, or at least
Only dismiss'd them from our presence, who
Urged me to send them to their satrapies?
Sal. True; that I had forgotten; that is, sire,
If they e'er reach'd their satrapies — why, then,
Reprove me more for my advice.
Sar. And if
They do not reach them — look to it! — in safety,
In safety, mark me — and security —
Look to thine own.
Sal. Permit me to depart;
Their *safety* shall be cared for.
Sar. Get thee hence, then;
And, prithee, think more gently of thy brother.
Sal. Sire, I shall ever duly serve my sovereign.
[*Exit* Salemenes.
Sar. (*solus*). That man is of a temper too severe;
Hard but as lofty as the rock, and free
From all the taints of common earth — while I
Am softer clay, impregnated with flowers:
But as our mould is, must the produce be.
If I have err'd this time, 't is on the side
Where error sits most lightly on that sense,
I know not what to call it; but it reckons
With me ofttimes for pain, and sometimes pleasure;
A spirit which seems placed about my heart
To count its throbs, not quicken them, and ask

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Questions which mortal never dared to ask me,
Nor Baal, though an oracular deity —
Albeit his marble face majestical
Frowns as the shadow of the evening dim
His brows to changed expression, till at times
I think the statue looks in act to speak.
Away with these vain thoughts, I will be joyous —
And here comes Joy's true herald.

Enter MYRRHA.

Myr. King! the sky
Is overcast, and musters muttering thunder,
In clouds that seem approaching fast, and show
In forked flashes a commanding tempest.
Will you then quit the palace?

Sar. Tempest, say'st thou?

Myr. Ay, my good lord.

Sar. For my own part, I should be
Not ill content to vary the smooth scene,
And watch the warring elements; but this
Would little suit the silken garments and
Smooth faces of our festive friends. Say, Myrrha,
Art thou of those who dread the roar of clouds?

Myr. In my own country we respect their voices
As auguries of Jove.

Sar. Jove! — ay, your Baal —
Ours also have a property in thunder,
And ever and anon some falling bolt
Proves his divinity, — and yet sometimes
Strikes his own altars.

Myr. That were a dread omen.

Sar. Yes — for the priests. Well, we will not go forth
Beyond the palace walls to-night, but make
Our feast within.

Myr. Now, Jove be praised! that he
Hath heard the prayer thou wouldst not hear. The gods
Are kinder to thee than thou to thyself,
And flash this storm between thee and thy foes,
To shield thee from them.

Sar. Child, if there be peril,
Methinks it is the same within these walls
As on the river's brink.

Myr. Not so; these walls
Are high and strong, and guarded. Treason has
To penetrate through many a winding way,
And massy portal; but in the pavilion

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There is no bulwark.
Sar. No, nor in the palace,
Nor in the fortress, nor upon the top
Of cloud-fenced Caucasus, where the eagle sits
Nested in pathless clefts, if treachery be:
Even as the arrow finds the airy king,
The steel will reach the earthly. But be calm:
The men, or innocent or guilty, are
Banish'd, and far upon their way.
Myr. They live, then?
Sar. So sanguinary? *Thou!*
Myr. I would not shrink
From just infliction of due punishment
On those who seek your life: wer 't otherwise,
I should not merit mine. Besides, you heard
The princely Salemenes.
Sar. This is strange;
The gentle and the austere are both against me,
And urge me to revenge.
Myr. 'Tis a Greek virtue.
Sar. But not a kingly one — I 'll none on 't; or
If ever I indulge in 't, it shall be
With kings — my equals.
Myr. These men sought to be so.
Sar. Myrrha, this is too feminine, and springs
From fear ——
Myr. For you.
Sar. No matter, still 't is fear.
I have observed your sex, once roused to wrath,
Are timidly vindictive to a pitch
Of perseverance, which I would not copy.
I thought you were exempt from this, as from
The childless helplessness of Asian women.
Myr. My lord, I am no boaster of my love,
Nor of my attributes; I have shared your splendour
And will partake your fortunes. You may live
To find one slave more true than subject myriads;
But this the gods avert! I am content
To be beloved on trust for what I feel,
Rather than prove it to you in your griefs,
Which might not yield to any cares of mine.
Sar. Grief cannot come where perfect love exists,
Except to heighten it, and vanish from
That which it could not scare away. Let's in —
The hour approaches, and we must prepare
To meet the invited guests, who grace our feast. [*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.

The Hall of the Palace illuminated — SARDANAPALUS *and his Guests at Table.— A Storm without, and Thunder occasionally heard during the Banquet.*

Sar. Fill full! why this is as it should be: here
Is my true realm, amidst bright eyes and faces
Happy as fair! Here sorrow cannot reach.
Zam. Nor elsewhere — where the king is, pleasure sparkles.
Sar. Is not this better now than Nimrod's huntings,
Or my wild grandam's chase in search of kingdoms
She could not keep when conquer'd?
Alt. Mighty though
They were, as all thy royal line have been,
Yet none of those who went before have reach'd
The acmé of Sardanapalus, who
Has placed his joy in peace — the sole true glory.
Sar. And pleasure, good Altada, to which glory
Is but the path. What is it that we seek?
Enjoyment! We have cut the way short to it,
And not gone tracking it through human ashes,
Making a grave with every footstep.
Zam. No;
All hearts are happy, and all voices bless
The king of peace, who holds a world in jubilee.
Sar. Art sure of that? I have heard otherwise;
Some say that there be traitors.
Zam. Traitors they
Who dare to say so! — 'T is impossible.
What cause?
Sar. What cause? true, — fill the goblet up;
We will not think of them: there are none such,
Or if there be, they are gone.
Alt. Guests, to my pledge!
Down on your knees, and drink a measure to
The safety of the king — the monarch, say I?
The god Sardanapalus!

[ZAMES *and the Guests kneel and exclaim* —

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Mightier than
His father Baal, the god Sardanapalus!
[*It thunders as they kneel; some start up in confusion.*
Zam. Why do you rise, my friends? in that strong peal
His father gods consented.
Myr. Menaced, rather.
King, wilt thou bear this mad impiety?
Sar. Impiety! — nay, if the sires who reign'd
Before me can be gods, I 'll not disgrace
Their lineage. But arise, my pious friends;
Hoard your devotion for the thunderer there:
I seek but to be loved, not worshipp'd.
All. Both —
Both you must ever be by all true subjects.
Sar. Methinks the thunders still increase: it is
An awful night.
Myr. Oh yes, for those who have
No palace to protect their worshippers.
Sar. That's true, my Myrrha; and could I convert
My realm to one wide shelter for the wretched,
I'd do it.
Myr. Thou 'rt no god, then, not to be
Able to work a will so good and general,
As thy wish would imply.
Sar. And your gods, then,
Who can, and do not?
Myr. Do not speak of that,
Lest we provoke them.
Sar. True, they love not censure
Better than mortals. Friends, a thought has struck me:
Were there no temples, would there, think ye, be
Air worshippers? that is, when it is angry,
And pelting as even now.
Myr. The Persian prays
Upon his mountain.
Sar. Yes, when the sun shines.
Myr. And I would ask if this your palace were
Unroof'd and desolate, how many flatterers
Would lick the dust in which the king lay low?
Alt. The fair Ionian is too sarcastic
Upon a nation whom she knows not well;
The Assyrians know no pleasure but their king's,
And homage is their pride.
Sar. Nay, pardon, guests,
The fair Greek's readiness of speech.

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Alt. *Pardon!* sire:
We honour her of all things next to thee.
Hark! what was that?
Zam. That! nothing but the jar
Of distant portals shaken by the wind.
Alt. It sounded like the clash of — hark again!
Zam. The big rain pattering on the roof.
Sar. No more.
Myrrha, my love, hast thou thy shell in order?
Sing me a song of Sappho, her, thou know'st,
Who in thy country threw —

Enter PANIA, *with his sword and garments bloody, and disordered. The Guests rise in confusion.*

Pan. (*to the Guards*). Look to the portals;
And with your best speed to the walls without.
Your arms! To arms! the king 's in danger. Monarch!
Excuse this haste, — 't is faith.
Sar. Speak on.
Pan. It is
As Salemenes fear'd; the faithless satraps ——
Sar. You are wounded — give some wine. Take breath, good Pania.
Pan. 'Tis nothing — a mere flesh wound. I am worn
More with my speed to warn my sovereign,
Than hurt in his defence.
Myr. Well, sir, the rebels?
Pan. Soon as Arbaces and Beleses reach'd
Their stations in the city, they refused
To march; and on my attempt to use the power
Which I was delegated with, they call'd
Upon their troops, who rose in fierce defiance.
Myr. All?
Pan. Too many.
Sar. Spare not of thy free speech,
To spare mine ears the truth.
Pan. My own slight guard
Were faithful, and what's left of it is still so.
Myr. And are these all the force still faithful?
Pan. No —
The Bactrians, now led on by Salemenes,
Who even then was on his way, still urged
By strong suspicion of the Median chiefs,
Are numerous, and make strong head against
The rebels, fighting inch by inch, and forming

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An orb around the palace, where they mean
To centre all their force, and save the king.
(*He hesitates.*) I am charged to ——
Myr. 'T is no time for hesitation.
Pan. Prince Salemenes, doth implore the king
To arm himself, although but for a moment,
And show himself unto the soldiers: his
Sole presence in this instant might do more
Than hosts can do in his behalf.
Sar. What, ho!
My armour there.
Myr. And wilt thou?
Sar. Will I not?
Ho, there! — but seek not for the buckler: 't is
Too heavy: — a light cuirass and my sword.
Where are the rebels?
Pan. Scarce a furlong's length
From the outward wall the fiercest conflict rages.
Sar. Then I may charge on horseback. Sfero, ho!
Order my horse out. — There is space enough
Even in our courts, and by the outer gate,
To marshal half the horsemen of Arabia.
[*Exit* SFERO *for the armour.*
Myr. How I do love thee!
Sar. I ne'er doubted it.
Myr. But now I know thee.
Sar. (*to his Attendant*). Bring down my spear too —
Where's Salemenes?
Pan. Where a soldier should be,
In the thick of the fight.
Sar. Then hasten to him —— Is
The path still open, and communication
Left 'twixt the palace and the phalanx?
Pan. 'T was
When I late left him, and I have no fear:
Our troops were steady, and the phalanx form'd.
Sar. Tell him to spare his person for the present,
And that I will not spare my own — and say,
I come.
Pan. There 's victory in the very word.
[*Exit* PANIA.
Sar. Altada — Zames — forth, and arm ye! There
Is all in readiness in the armoury.
See that the women are bestow'd in safety
In the remote apartments: let a guard
Be set before them, with strict charge to quit

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The post but with their lives — command it, Zames.
Altada, arm yourself, and return here;
Your post is near our person.

[*Exeunt* ZAMES, ALTADA, *and all save* MYRRHA.

Enter SFERO *and others with the King's Arms, &c.*

Sfe. King! your armour.
Sar. (*arming himself.*) Give me the cuirass — so: my baldric; now
My sword: I had forgot the helm — where is it?
That 's well — no, 't is too heavy: you mistake, too —
It was not this I meant, but that which bears
A diadem around it.
Sfe. Sire, I deem'd
That too conspicuous from the precious stones
To risk your sacred brow beneath — and trust me,
This is of better metal, though less rich.
Sar. You deem'd! Are you too turn'd a rebel? Fellow!
Your part is to obey: return, and — no —
It is too late — I will go forth without it.
Sfe. At least, wear this.
Sar. Wear Caucasus! why, 't is
A mountain on my temples.
Sfe. Sire, the meanest
Soldier goes not forth thus exposed to battle.
All men will recognise you — for the storm
Has ceased, and the moon breaks forth in her brightness.
Sar. I go forth to be recognised, and thus
Shall be so sooner. Now — my spear! I 'm arm'd.

[*In going stops short, and turns to* SFERO.

Sfero — I had forgotten — bring the mirror.*
Sfe. The mirror, sire?
Sar. Yes, sir, of polish'd brass,
Brought from the spoils of India — but be speedy.

[*Exit* SFERO.

Sar. Myrrha, retire unto a place of safety.
Why went you not forth with the other damsels?
Myr. Because my place is here.
Sar. And when I am gone ——
Myr. I follow.
Sar. *You!* to battle?
Myr. If it were so.
'T were not the first Greek girl had trod the path.

* "Such the *mirror* Otho held
In the Illyrian field." — See Juvenal.

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I will await here your *return*.

Sar. The place
Is spacious, and the first to be sought out,
If they prevail; and, if it be so,
And I return not——

Myr. Still we meet again.

Sar. How?

Myr. In the spot where all must meet at last—
In Hades! if there be, as I believe,
A shore beyond the Styx: and if there be not,
In ashes.

Sar. Darest thou so much?

Myr. I dare all things
Except survive what I have loved, to be
A rebel's booty: forth, and do your bravest.

Re-enter SFERO *with the mirror.*

Sar. (*looking at himself.*) This cuirass fits me well, the baldric better,
And the helm not at all. Methinks I seem
[*Flings away the helmet after trying it again.*
Passing well in these toys; and now to prove them.
Altada! Where 's Altada?

Sfe. Waiting, sire,
Without: he has your shield in readiness.

Sar. True; I forgot he is my shield-bearer
By right of blood, derived from age to age.
Myrrha, embrace me; — yet once more — once more —
Love me, whate'er betide. My chiefest glory
Shall be to make me worthier of your love.

Myr. Go forth, and conquer!
[*Exeunt* SARDANAPALUS *and* SFERO.
Now, I am alone,
All are gone forth, and of that all how few
Perhaps return. Let him but vanquish, and
Me perish! If he vanquish not, I perish;
For I will not outlive him. He has wound
About my heart, I know not how nor why.
Not for that he is king; for now his kingdom
Rocks underneath his throne, and the earth yawns
To yield him no more of it than a grave;
And yet I love him more. Oh, mighty Jove!
Forgive this monstrous love for a barbarian,
Who knows not of Olympus! yes, I love him
Now, now, far more than —— Hark — to the war shout!

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Methinks it nears me. If it should be so,
[*She draws forth a small vial.*
This cunning Colchian poison, which my father
Learn'd to compound on Euxine shores, and taught me
How to preserve, shall free me! It had freed me
Long ere this hour, but that I loved, until
I half forgot I was a slave: — where all
Are slaves save one, and proud of servitude,
So they are served in turn by something lower
In the degree of bondage, we forget
That shackles worn like ornaments no less
Are chains. Again that shout! and now the clash
Of arms — and now — and now ——

Enter ALTADA.

Alt. Ho, Sfero, ho!

Myr. He is not here; what wouldst thou with him? How
Goes on the conflict?

Alt. Dubiously and fiercely.

Myr. And the king?

Alt. Like a king. I must find Sfero,
And bring him a new spear and his own helmet.
He fights till now bare-headed, and by far
Too much exposed. The soldiers knew his face,
And the foe too; and in the moon's broad light,
His silk tiara and his flowing hair
Make him a mark too royal. Every arrow
Is pointed at the fair hair and fair features,
And the broad fillet which crowns both.

Myr. Ye gods,
Who fulminate o'er my father's land, protect him!
Were you sent by the king?

Alt. By Salemenes,
Who sent me privily upon this charge,
Without the knowledge of the careless sovereign.
The king! the king fights as he revels! ho!
What, Sfero! I will seek the armoury —
He must be there. [*Exit* ALTADA.

Myr. 'T is no dishonour — no —
'T is no dishonour to have loved this man.
I almost wish now, what I never wish'd
Before, that he were Grecian. If Alcides
Were shamed in wearing Lydian Omphale's
She-garb, and wielding her vile distaff; surely
He, who springs up a Hercules at once,
Nursed in effeminate arts from youth to manhood,

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And rushes from the banquet to the battle,
As though it were a bed of love, deserves
That a Greek girl should be his paramour,
And a Greek bard his minstrel, a Greek tomb
His monument. How goes the strife, sir?

Enter an Officer.

Officer. Lost,
Lost almost past recovery. Zames! Where
Is Zames?

Myr. Posted with the guard appointed
To watch before the apartment of the women.

[*Exit Officer.*

Myr. (*sola.*) He 's gone; and told no more than that all 's lost!
What need have I to know more? In those words,
Those little words, a kingdom and a king,
A line of thirteen ages, and the lives
Of thousands, and the fortune of all left
With life, are merged; and I, too, with the great,
Like a small bubble breaking with the wave
Which bore it, shall be nothing. At the least,
My fate is in my keeping: no proud victor
Shall count me with his spoils.

Enter PANIA.

Pan. Away with me,
Myrrha, without delay; we must not lose
A moment — all that 's left us now.

Myr. The king?

Pan. Sent me here to conduct you hence, beyond
The river, by a secret passage.

Myr. Then
He lives ——

Pan. And charged me to secure your life,
And beg you to live on for his sake, till
He can rejoin you.

Myr. Will he then give way?

Pan. Not till the last. Still, still he does whate'er
Despair can do; and step by step disputes
The very palace.

Myr. They are here, then: — ay,
Their shouts come ringing through the ancient halls,
Never profaned by rebel echoes till
This fatal night. Farewell, Assyria's line!

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Farewell to all of Nimrod! Even the name
Is now no more.
Pan. Away with me — away!
Myr. No: I 'll die here! — Away, and tell your king
I loved him to the last.

Enter SARDANAPALUS *and* SALEMENES *with Soldiers.* PANIA *quits* MYRRHA, *and ranges himself with them.*

Sar. Since it is thus,
We 'll die where we were born — in our own halls.
Serry your ranks — stand firm. I have despatch'd
A trusty satrap for the guard of Zames,
All fresh and faithful; they 'll be here anon.
All is not over. — Pania, look to Myrrha.
[PANIA *returns towards* MYRRHA.
Sal. We have breathing time; yet once more charge, my friends —
One for Assyria!
Sar. Rather say for Bactria!
My faithful Bactrians, I will henceforth be
King of your nation, and we 'll hold together
This realm as province.
Sal. Hark! they come — they come.

Enter BELESES *and* ARBACES *with the Rebels.*

Arb. Set on, we have them in the toil. Charge! Charge!
Bel. On! on! — Heaven fights for us, and with us. — On!
[*They charge the King and* SALEMENES *with their Troops, who defend themselves till the Arrival of* ZAMES, *with the Guard before mentioned. The Rebels are then driven off, and pursued by* SALEMENES, *&c. As the King is going to join the pursuit,* BELESES *crosses him.*
Bel. Ho! tyrant — *I* will end this war.
Sar. Even so,
My warlike priest, and precious prophet, and
Grateful and trusty subject: — yield, I pray thee.
I would reserve thee for a fitter doom,
Rather than dip my hands in holy blood.
Bel. Thine hour is come.
Sar. No, thine. — I 've lately read,
Though but a young astrologer, the stars;
And, ranging round the zodiac, found thy fate
In the sign of the Scorpion, which proclaims

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That thou wilt now be crush'd.

Bel. But not by thee.

[*They fight*; BELESES *is wounded and disarmed.*

Sar. (*raising his sword to despatch him, exclaims*) —
Now call upon thy planets, will they shoot
From the sky to preserve their seer and credit?

[*A party of Rebels enter and rescue* BELESES. *They assail the King, who, in turn, is rescued by a Party of his Soldiers, who drive the Rebels off.*

The villain was a prophet after all.
Upon them — ho! there — victory is ours.

[*Exit in pursuit.*

Myr. (*to Pan.*) Pursue! Why stand'st thou here, and leavest the ranks
Of fellow-soldiers conquering without thee?

Pan. The king's command was not to quit thee.

Myr. *Me!*
Think not of me — a single soldier's arm
Must not be wanting now. I ask no guard,
I need no guard: what, with a world at stake,
Keep watch upon a woman? Hence, I say,
Or thou art shamed! Nay, then, *I* will go forth,
A feeble female, 'midst their desperate strife,
And bid thee guard me *there* — where thou shouldst shield
Thy sovereign. [*Exit* MYRRHA.

Pan. Yet stay, damsel! She 's gone.
If aught of ill betide her, better I
Had lost my life. Sardanapalus holds her
Far dearer than his kingdom, yet he fights
For that too; and can I do less than he,
Who never flash'd a scimitar till now?
Myrrha, return, and I obey you, though
In disobedience to the monarch. [*Exit* PANIA.

Enter ALTADA *and* SFERO *by an opposite door.*

Alt. Myrrha!
What, gone? yet she was here when the fight raged
And Pania also. Can aught have befallen them?

Sfe. I saw both safe, when late the rebels fled:
They probably are but retired to make
Their way back to the harem.

Alt. If the king
Prove victor, as it seems even now he must,
And miss his own Ionian, we are doom'd

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To worse than captive rebels.
Sfe. Let us trace them;
She cannot be fled far; and, found, she makes
A richer prize to our soft sovereign
Than his recover'd kingdom.
Alt. Baal himself
Ne'er fought more fiercely to win empire, than
His silken son to save it: he defies
All augury of foes or friends; and like
The close and sultry summer's day, which bodes
A twilight tempest, bursts forth in such thunder
As sweeps the air and deluges the earth.
The man's inscrutable.
Sfe. Not more than others.
All are the sons of circumstance: away—
Let 's seek the slave out, or prepare to be
Tortured for his infatuation, and
Condemn'd without a crime. [*Exeunt.*

Enter SALEMENES *and Soldiers, &c.*

Sal. The triumph is
Flattering: they are beaten backward from the palace,
And we have open'd regular access
To the troops station'd on the other side
Euphrates, who may still be true; nay, must be,
When they hear of our victory. But where
Is the chief victor? where 's the king?

Enter SARDANAPALUS, *cum suis, &c. and* MYRRHA.

Sar. Here, brother.
Sal. Unhurt, I hope.
Sar. Not quite; but let it pass.
We 've clear'd the palace——
Sal. And I trust the city.
Our numbers gather; and I 've ordered onward
A cloud of Parthians, hitherto reserved,
All fresh and fiery, to be pour'd upon them
In their retreat, which soon will be a flight.
Sar. It is already, or at least they march'd
Faster than I could follow with my Bactrians,
Who spared no speed. I am spent: give me a seat.
Sal. There stands the throne, sire.
Sar. 'T is no place to rest on,
For mind nor body: let me have a couch,
[*They place a seat.*

A peasant's stool, I care not what: so — now
I breathe more freely.
Sal. This great hour has proved
The brightest and most glorious of your life.
Sar. And the most tiresome. Where 's my cupbearer?
Bring me some water.
Sal. (*smiling.*) 'T is the first time he
Ever had such an order: even I,
Your most austere of counsellors, would now
Suggest a purpler beverage
Sar. Blood, — doubtless.
But there 's enough of that shed; as for wine,
I have learn'd to-night the price of the pure element:
Thrice have I drank of it, and thrice renew'd,
With greater strength than the grape ever gave me,
My charge upon the rebels. Where 's the soldier
Who gave me water in his helmet?
One of the Guards. Slain, sire!
An arrow pierced his brain, while, scattering
The last drops from his helm, he stood in act
To place it on his brows.
Sar. Slain! unrewarded!
And slain to serve my thirst: that 's hard, poor slave!
Had he but lived, I would have gorged him with
Gold: all the gold of earth could ne'er repay
The pleasure of that draught; for I was parch'd
As I am now. [*They bring water — he drinks.*
I live again — from henceforth
The goblet I reserve for hours of love,
But war on water.
Sal. And that bandage, sire,
Which girds your arm?
Sar. A scratch from brave Beleses.
Myr. Oh! he is wounded!
Sar. Not too much of that;
And yet it feels a little stiff and painful,
Now I am cooler.
Myr. You have bound it with ——
Sar. The fillet of my diadem: the first time
That ornament was ever aught to me,
Save an incumbrance.
Myr. (*to the Attendants.*) Summon speedily
A leech of the most skilful: pray, retire:
I will unbind your wound and tend it.
Sar. Do so,
For now it throbs sufficiently: but what

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Know'st thou of wounds? yet wherefore do I ask?
Know'st thou, my brother, where I lighted on
This minion?
Sal. Herding with the other females,
Like frighten'd antelopes.
Sar. No: like the dam
Of the young lion, femininely raging,
(And femininely meaneth furiously,
Because all passions in excess are female,)
Against the hunter flying with her cub,
She urged on with her voice and gesture, and
Her floating hair and flashing eyes, the soldiers,
In the pursuit.
Sal. Indeed!
Sar. You see, this night
Made warriors of more than me. I paused
To look upon her, and her kindled cheek;
Her large black eyes, that flash'd through her long hair
As it stream'd o'er her; her blue veins that rose
Along her most transparent brow; her nostril
Dilated from its symmetry; her lips
Apart; her voice that clove through all the din,
As a lute's pierceth through the cymbal's clash,
Jarr'd but not drown'd by the loud brattling; her
Waved arms, more dazzling with their own born whiteness
Than the steel her hand held, which she caught up
From a dead soldier's grasp; — all these things made
Her seem unto the troops a prophetess
Of victory, or Victory herself,
Come down to hail us hers.
Sal. (*aside.*) This is too much.
Again the love-fit 's on him, and all 's lost,
Unless we turn his thoughts.
(*Aloud.*) But pray thee, sire,
Think of your wound — you said even now 't was painful.
Sar. That 's true, too; but I must not think of it.
Sal. I have look'd to all things needful, and will now
Receive reports of progress made in such
Orders as I had given, and then return
To hear your further pleasure.
Sar. Be it so.
Sal. (*in retiring.*) Myrrha!
Myr. Prince!
Sal. You have shown a soul to-night,
Which, were he not my sister's lord —— But now
I have no time: thou lovest the king?

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Myr. I love
Sardanapalus.
Sal. But wouldst have him king still?
Myr. I would not have him less than what he should be.
Sal. Well then, to have him king, and yours, and all
He should, or should not be; to have him *live*,
Let him not sink back into luxury.
You have more power upon his spirit than
Wisdom within these walls, or fierce rebellion
Raging without: look well that he relapse not.
Myr. There needed not the voice of Salemenes
To urge me on to this: I will not fail.
All that a woman's weakness can——
Sal. Is power
Omnipotent o'er such a heart as his:
Exert it wisely. [*Exit* SALEMENES.
Sar. Myrrha! what, at whispers
With my stern brother? I shall soon be jealous.
Myr. (*smiling*). You have cause, sire; for on the earth
there breathes not
A man more worthy of a woman's love —
A soldier's trust — a subject's reverence —
A king's esteem — the whole world's admiration!
Sar. Praise him, but not so warmly. I must not
Hear those sweet lips grow eloquent in aught
That throws me into shade; yet you speak truth.
Myr. And now retire, to have your wound look'd to.
Pray, lean on me.
Sar. Yes, love! but not from pain.
[*Exeunt omnes.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.

SARDANAPALUS *discovered sleeping upon a Couch, and occasionally disturbed in his Slumbers, with* MYRRHA *watching.*

Myr. (*sola, gazing*). I have stolen upon his rest, if rest
it be,
Which thus convulses slumber: shall I wake him?
No, he seems calmer. Oh, thou God of Quiet!

Whose reign is o'er seal'd eyelids and soft dreams,
Or deep, deep sleep, so as to be unfathom'd,
Look like thy brother, Death — so still — so stirless —
For then we are happiest, as it may be, we
Are happiest of all within the realm
Of thy stern, silent, and unwakening twin.
Again he moves — again the play of pain
Shoots o'er his features, as the sudden gust
Crisps the reluctant lake that lay so calm
Beneath the mountain shadow; or the blast
Ruffles the autumn leaves, that drooping cling
Faintly and motionless to their loved boughs.
I must awake him — yet not yet: who knows
From what I rouse him? It seems pain; but if
I quicken him to heavier pain? The fever
Of this tumultuous night, the grief too of
His wound, though slight, may cause all this, and shake
Me more to see than him to suffer. No:
Let Nature use her own maternal means, —
And I await to second, not disturb her.

Sar. (*awakening*). Not so — although ye multiplied the stars,
And gave them to me as a realm to share
From you and with you! I would not so purchase
The empire of eternity. Hence — hence —
Old hunter of the earliest brutes! and ye,
Who hunted fellow-creatures as if brutes!
Once bloody mortals — and now bloodier idols,
If your priests lie not! And thou, ghastly beldame!
Dripping with dusky gore, and trampling on
The carcasses of Inde — away! away!
Where am I? Where the spectres? Where —— No — that
Is no false phantom: I should know it 'midst
All that the dead dare gloomily raise up
From their black gulf to daunt the living. Myrrha!

Myr. Alas! thou art pale, and on thy brow the drops
Gather like night dew. My beloved, hush —
Calm thee. Thy speech seems of another world,
And thou art lord of this. Be of good cheer;
All will go well.

Sar. Thy *hand* — so — 't is thy hand;
'T is flesh; grasp — clasp — yet closer, till I feel
Myself that which I was.

Myr. At least know me
For what I am, and ever must be — thine.

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Sar. I know it now. I know this life again.
Ah, Myrrha! I have been where we shall be.
Myr. My lord!
Sar. I 've been i' the grave — where worms are lords,
And kings are —— But I did not deem it so;
I thought 't was nothing.
Myr. So it is; except
Unto the timid, who anticipate
That which may never be.
Sar. Oh, Myrrha! if
Sleep shows such things, what may not death disclose?
Myr. I know no evil death can show, which life
Has not already shown to those who live
Embodied longest. If there be indeed
A shore where mind survives, 't will be as mind,
All unincorporate: or if there flits
A shadow of this cumbrous clog of clay,
Which stalks, methinks, between our souls and heaven,
And fetters us to earth — at least the phantom,
Whate'er it have to fear, will not fear death.
Sar. I fear it not; but I have felt — have seen —
A legion of the dead.
Myr. And so have I.
The dust we tread upon was once alive,
And wretched. But proceed: what hast thou seen?
Speak it, 't will lighten thy dimm'd mind.
Sar. Methought ——
Myr. Yet pause, thou art tired — in pain — exhausted; all
Which can impair both strength and spirit: seek
Rather to sleep again.
Sar. Not now — I would not
Dream; though I know it now to be a dream
What I have dreamt: — and canst thou bear to hear it?
Myr. I can bear all things, dreams of life or death,
Which I participate with you in semblance
Or full reality.
Sar. And this look'd real,
I tell you: after that these eyes were open,
I saw them in their flight — for then they fled.
Myr. Say on.
Sar. I saw, that is, I dream'd myself
Here — here — even where we are, guests as we were,
Myself a host that deem'd himself but guest,
Willing to equal all in social freedom;
But, on my right hand and my left, instead

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Of thee and Zames, and our custom'd meeting,
Was ranged on my left hand a haughty, dark,
And deadly face — I could not recognise it,
Yet I had seen it, though I knew not where:
The features were a giant's, and the eye
Was still, yet lighted; his long locks curl'd down
On his vast bust, whence a huge quiver rose
With shaft-heads feather'd from the eagle's wing,
That peep'd up bristling through his serpent hair.
I invited him to fill the cup which stood
Between us, but he answer'd not — I fill'd it —
He took it not, but stared upon me, till
I trembled at the fix'd glare of his eye:
I frown'd upon him as a king should frown —
He frown'd not in his turn, but look'd upon me
With the same aspect, which appall'd me more,
Because it changed not; and I turn'd for refuge
To milder guests, and sought them on the right,
Where thou wert wont to be. But ——

[*He pauses.*

Myr. What instead?

Sar. In thy own chair — thy own place in the banquet —
I sought thy sweet face in the circle — but
Instead — a gray-hair'd, wither'd, bloody-eyed,
And bloody-handed, ghastly, ghostly thing,
Female in garb, and crown'd upon the brow,
Furrow'd with years, yet sneering with the passion
Of vengeance, leering too with that of lust,
Sate: — my veins curdled.

Myr. Is this all?

Sar. Upon
Her right hand — her lank, bird-like right hand — stood
A goblet, bubbling o'er with blood; and on
Her left, another, fill'd with — what I saw not,
But turn'd from it and her. But all along
The table sate a range of crowned wretches,
Of various aspects, but of one expression.

Myr. And felt you not this a mere vision?

Sar. No:
It was so palpable, I could have touch'd them.
I turn'd from one face to another, in
The hope to find at last one which I knew
Ere I saw theirs: but no — all turn'd upon me,
And stared, but neither ate nor drank, but stared,
Till I grew stone, as they seem'd half to be,
Yet breathing stone, for I felt life in them,

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And life in me: there was a horrid kind
Of sympathy between us, as if they
Had lost a part of death to come to me,
And I the half of life to sit by them.
We were in an existence all apart
From heaven or earth —— And rather let me see
Death all than such a being!

Myr. And the end?

Sar. At last I sate, marble, as they, when rose
The hunter and the crone; and smiling on me —
Yes, the enlarged but noble aspect of
The hunter smiled upon me — I should say,
His lips, for his eyes moved not — and the woman's
Thin lips relax'd to something like a smile.
Both rose, and the crown'd figures on each hand
Rose also, as if aping their chief shades —
Mere mimics even in death — but I sate still:
A desperate courage crept through every limb,
And at the last I fear'd them not, but laugh'd
Full in their phantom faces. But then — then
The hunter laid his hand on mine: I took it,
And grasp'd it — but it melted from my own;
While he too vanish'd, and left nothing but
The memory of a hero, for he look'd so.

Myr. And was: the ancestor or heroes, too,
And thine no less.

Sar. Ay, Myrrha, but the woman,
The female who remain'd, she flew upon me,
And burnt my lips up with her noisome kisses;
And, flinging down the goblets on each hand,
Methought their poisons flow'd around us, till
Each form'd a hideous river. Still she clung;
The other phantoms, like a row of statues,
Stood dull as in our temples, but she still
Embraced me, while I shrunk from her, as if,
In lieu of her remote descendant, I
Had been the son who slew her for her incest.
Then — then — a chaos of all loathsome things
Throng'd thick and shapeless: I was dead, yet feeling —
Buried, and raised again — consumed by worms,
Purged by the flames, and wither'd in the air!
I can fix nothing further of my thoughts,
Save that I long'd for thee, and sought for thee,
In all these agonies, and woke and found thee.

Myr. So shalt thou find me ever at thy side,
Here and hereafter, if the last may be.

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But think not of these things — the mere creations
Of late events, acting upon a frame
Unused to toil, yet over-wrought by toil
Such as might try the sternest.
Sar. I am better.
Now that I see *thee once* more, *what was seen*
Seems nothing.

Enter SALEMENES.

Sal. Is the king so soon awake?
Sar. Yes, brother, and I would I had not slept;
For all the predecessors of our line
Rose up, methought, to drag me down to them.
My father was amongst them, too; but he,
I know not why, kept from me, leaving me
Between the hunter-founder of our race,
And her, the homicide and husband-killer,
Whom you call glorious.
Sal. So I term you also,
Now you have shown a spirit like to hers.
By day-break I propose that we set forth,
And charge once more the rebel crew, who still
Keep gathering head, repulsed, but not quite quell'd.
Sar. How wears the night?
Sal. There yet remain some hours
Of darkness: use them for your further rest.
Sar. No, not to-night, if 't is not gone: methought
I pass'd hours in that vision.
Myr. Scarcely one;
I watch'd by you: it was a heavy hour,
But an hour only.
Sar. Let us then hold council;
To-morrow we set forth.
Sal. But ere that time,
I had a grace to seek.
Sar. 'T is granted.
Sal. Hear it
Ere you reply too readily; and 't is
For *your* ear only.
Myr. Prince, I take my leave.
[*Exit* MYRRHA.
Sal. That slave deserves her freedom.
Sar. Freedom only!
That slave deserves to share a throne.
Sal. Your patience —

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'T is not yet vacant, and 't is of its partner
I come to speak with you.
Sar. How! of the queen?
Sal. Even so. I judged it fitting for their safety,
That, ere the dawn, she sets forth with her children
For Paphlagonia, where our kinsman Cotta
Governs; and there at all events secure
My nephews and your sons their lives, and with them
Their just pretensions to the crown in case ——
Sar. I perish — as is probable: well thought —
Let them set forth with a sure escort.
Sal. That
Is all provided, and the galley ready
To drop down the Euphrates; but ere they
Depart, will you not see ——
Sar. My sons? It may
Unman my heart, and the poor boys will weep;
And what can I reply to comfort them,
Save with some hollow hopes, and ill-worn smiles?
You know I cannot feign.
Sal. But you can feel!
At least, I trust so: in a word, the queen
Requests to see you ere you part — for ever.
Sar. Unto what end? what purpose? I will grant
Aught — all that she can ask — but such a meeting.
Sal. You know, or ought to know, enough of women,
Since you have studied them so steadily,
That what they ask in aught that touches on
The heart, is dearer to their feelings or
Their fancy, than the whole external world.
I think as you do of my sister's wish;
But 't was her wish — she is my sister — you
Her husband — will you grant it?
Sar. 'T will be useless:
But let her come.
Sal. I go.

[*Exit* SALEMENES.

Sar. We have lived asunder
Too long to meet again — and *now* to meet!
Have I not cares enow, and pangs enow,
To bear alone, that we must mingle sorrows,
Who have ceased to mingle love?

Re-enter SALEMENES *and* ZARINA.

Sal. My sister! Courage:

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Shame not your blood with trembling, but remember
From whence we sprung. The queen is present, sire.
Zar. I pray thee, brother, leave me.
Sal. Since you ask it.
[*Exit* SALEMENES.
Zar. Alone with him! How many a year has pass'd,
Though we are still so young, since we have met,
Which I have worn in widowhood of heart.
He loved me not: yet he seems little changed —
Changed to me only — would the change were mutual!
Hé speaks not — scarce regards me — not a word —
Nor look — yet he *was* soft of voice and aspect,
Indifferent, not austere. My lord!
Sar. Zarina!
Zar. No, *not* Zarina — do not say Zarina.
That tone — that word — annihilate long years,
And things which make them longer.
Sar. 'T is too late
To think of these past dreams. Let 's not reproach —
That is, reproach me not — for the *last* time ——
Zar. And *first*. I ne'er reproach'd you.
Sar. 'T is most true;
And that reproof comes heavier on my heart
Than —— But our hearts are not in our own power.
Zar. Nor hands; but I gave both.
Sar. Your brother said
It was your will to see me, ere you went
From Nineveh with —— (*He hesitates*).
Zar. Our children: it is true.
I wish'd to thank you that you have not divided
My heart from all that 's left it now to love —
Those who are yours and mine, who look like you,
And look upon me as you look'd upon me
Once —— But they have not changed.
Sar. Nor ever will.
I fain would have them dutiful.
Zar. I cherish
Those infants, not alone from the blind love
Of a fond mother, but as a fond woman.
They are now the only tie between us.
Sar. Deem not
I have not done you justice: rather make them
Resemble your own line than their own sire.
I trust them with you — to you: fit them for
A throne, or, if that be denied —— You have heard
Of this night's tumults?

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Zar. I had half forgotten,
And could have welcomed any grief save yours,
Which gave me to behold your face again.
Sar. The throne — I say it not in fear — but 't is
In peril; they perhaps may never mount it:
But let them not for this lose sight of it.
I will dare all things to bequeath it them;
But if I fail, then they must win it back
Bravely — and, won, wear it wisely, not as I
Have wasted down my royalty.
Zar. They ne'er
Shall know from me of aught but what may honour
Their father's memory.
Sar. Rather let them hear
The truth from you than from a trampling world.
If they be in adversity, they 'll learn
Too soon the scorn of crowds for crownless princes,
And find that all their father's sins are theirs.
My boys! — I could have borne it were I childless.
Zar. Oh! do not say so — do not poison all
My peace left, by unwishing that thou wert
A father. If thou conquerest, they shall reign,
And honour him who saved the realm for them,
So little cared for as his own; and if ——
Sar. 'T is lost, all earth will cry out thank your father!
And they will swell the echo with a curse.
Zar. That they shall never do; but rather honour
The name of him, who, dying like a king,
In his last hours did more for his own memory
Than many monarchs in a length of days,
Which date the flight of time, but make no annals.
Sar. Our annals draw perchance unto their close;
But at the least, whate'er the past, their end
Shall be like their beginning — memorable.
Zar. Yet, be not rash — but careful of your life,
Live but for those who love.
Sar. And who are they?
A slave, who loves from passion — I 'll not say
Ambition — she has seen thrones shake, and loves;
A few friends, who have revell'd till we are
As one, for they are nothing if I fall;
A brother I have injured — children whom
I have neglected, and a spouse ——
Zar. Who loves.
Sar. And pardons?
Zar. I have never thought of this,

And cannot pardon till I have condemn'd.
Sar. My wife!
Zar. Now blessings on thee for that word!
I never thought to hear it more — from thee.
Sar. Oh! thou wilt hear it from my subjects. Yes —
These slaves whom I have nurtured, pamper'd, fed,
And swoln with peace, and gorged with plenty, till
They reign themselves — all monarchs in their mansions —
Now swarm forth in rebellion, and demand
His death, who made their lives a jubilee;
While the few upon whom I have no claim
Are faithful! This is true, yet monstrous.
Zar. 'T is
Perhaps too natural; for benefits
Turn poison in bad minds.
Sar. And good ones make
Good out of evil. Happier than the bee,
Which hives not but from wholesome flowers.
Zar. Then reap
The honey, nor inquire whence 't is derived.
Be satisfied — you are not all abandon'd.
Sar. My life insures me that. How long, bethink you,
Were not I yet a king, should I be mortal;
That is, where mortals *are*, not where they must be?
Zar. I know not. But yet live for my — that is,
Your children's sake!
Sar. My gentle, wrong'd Zarina!
I am the very slave of circumstance
And impulse — borne away with every breath!
Misplaced upon the throne — misplaced in life.
I know not what I could have been, but feel
I am not what I should be — let it end.
But take this with thee: if I was not form'd
To prize a love like thine, a mind like thine,
Nor dote even on thy beauty — as I 've doted
On lesser charms, for no cause save that such
Devotion was a duty, and I hated
All that look'd like a chain for me or others
(This even rebellion must avouch); yet hear
These words, perhaps among my last — that none
E'er valued more thy virtues, though he knew not
To profit by them — as the miner lights
Upon a vein of virgin ore, discovering
That which avails him nothing: he hath found it,
But 't is not his — but some superior's, who
Placed him to dig, but not divide the wealth

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Which sparkles at his feet; nor dare he lift
Nor poise it, but must grovel on, upturning
The sullen earth.
Zar. Oh! if thou hast at length
Discover'd that my love is worth esteem,
I ask no more — but let us hence together,
And *I* — let me say *we* — shall yet be happy.
Assyria is not all the earth — we 'll find
A world out of our own — and be more bless'd
Than I have ever been, or thou, with all
An empire to indulge thee.

Enter SALEMENES.

Sal. I must part ye —
The moments, which must not be lost, are passing.
Zar. Inhuman brother! wilt thou thus weigh out
Instants so high and blest?
Sal. Blest!
Zar. He hath been
So gentle with me, that I cannot think
Of quitting.
Sal. So — this feminine farewell
Ends as such partings end, in *no* departure.
I thought as much, and yielded against all
My better bodings. But it must not be.
Zar. Not be?
Sal. Remain, and perish ——
Zar. With my husband ——
Sal. And children.
Zar. Alas!
Sal. Hear me, sister, like
My sister: — all 's prepared to make your safety
Certain, and of the boys too, our last hopes;
'T is not a single question of mere feeling,
Though that were much — but 't is a point of state:
The rebels would do more to seize upon
The offspring of their sovereign, and so crush ——
Zar. Ah! do not name it.
Sal. Well, then, mark me: when
They are safe beyond the Median's grasp, the rebels
Have miss'd their chief aim — the extinction of
The line of Nimrod. Though the present king
Fall, his sons live for victory and vengeance.
Zar. But could not I remain, alone?
Sal. What! leave

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Your children, with two parents and yet orphans —
In a strange land — so young, so distant?
Zar. No —
My heart will break.
Sal. Now you know all — decide.
Sar. Zarina, he hath spoken well, and we
Must yield awhile to this necessity.
Remaining here, you may lose all; departing,
You save the better part of what is left,
To both of us, and to such loyal hearts
As yet beat in these kingdoms.
Sal. The time presses.
Sar. Go, then. If e'er we meet again, perhaps
I may be worthier of you — and, if not,
Remember that my faults, though not atoned for,
Are *ended*. Yet, I dread thy nature will
Grieve more above the blighted name and ashes
Which once were mightiest in Assyria — than ——
But I grow womanish again, and must not;
I must learn sternness now. My sins have all
Been of the softer order —— *hide* thy tears —
I do not bid thee *not* to shed them — 't were
Easier to stop Euphrates at its source
Than one tear of a true and tender heart —
But let me not behold them: they unman me
Here when I had remann'd myself. My brother,
Lead her away.
Zar. Oh, God! I never shall
Behold him more!
Sal. (*striving to conduct her*). Nay, sister, I *must* be obey'd.
Zar. I must remain — away! you shall not hold me.
What, shall he die alone? — *I* live alone?
Sal. He shall *not die alone;* but lonely you
Have lived for years.
Zar. That 's false! I knew *he* lived,
And lived upon his image — let me go!
Sal. (*conducting her off the stage*). Nay, then, I must use some fraternal force,
Which you will pardon.
Zar. Never. Help me! Oh!
Sardanapalus, wilt thou thus behold me
Torn from thee?
Sal. Nay — then all is lost again,
If that this moment is not gain'd.
Zar. My brain turns —

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My eyes fail — where is he? [*She faints.*
Sar. (*advancing*). No — set her down —
She's dead — and you have slain her.
Sal. 'Tis the mere
Faintness of o'erwrought passion: in the air
She will recover. Pray, keep back.— [*Aside.*] I must
Avail myself of this sole moment to
Bear her to where her children are embark'd,
I' the royal galley on the river.
[SALEMENES *bears her off.*
Sar. (*solus*). This, too —
And this too must I suffer — I, who never
Inflicted purposely on human hearts
A voluntary pang! But that is false —
She loved me, and I loved her.— Fatal passion!
Why dost thou not expire *at once* in hearts
Which thou hast lighted up at once? Zarina!
I must pay dearly for the desolation
Now brought upon thee. Had I never loved
But thee, I should have been an unopposed
Monarch of honouring nations. To what gulfs
A single deviation from the track
Of human duties leads even those who claim
The homage of mankind as their born due,
And find it, till they forfeit it themselves!

Enter MYRRHA.

Sar. *You* here! Who call'd you?
Myr. No one — but I heard
Far off a voice *of* wail and lamentation,
And thought ——
Sar. It forms no portion of your duties
To enter here till sought for.
Myr. Though I might,
Perhaps, recall some softer words of yours,
(Although they *too were chiding*,) which reproved me,
Because I ever dreaded to intrude;
Resisting my own wish and your injunction
To heed no time nor presence, but approach you
Uncall'd for: I retire.
Sar. Yet stay — being here.
I pray you pardon me: events have sour'd me
Till I wax peevish — heed it not: I shall
Soon be myself again.
Myr. I wait with patience,
What I shall see with pleasure.

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Sar. Scarce a moment
Before your entrance in this hall, Zarina,
Queen of Assyria, departed hence.
Myr. Ah!
Sar. Wherefore do you start?
Myr. Did I do so?
Sar. 'T was well you enter'd by another portal,
Else you had met. That pang at least is spared her!
Myr. I know to feel for her.
Sar. That is too much,
And beyond nature — 't is nor mutual
Nor possible. You cannot pity her,
Nor she aught but ——
Myr. Despise the favourite slave?
Not more than I have ever scorn'd myself.
Sar. Scorn'd! what, to be the envy of your sex,
And lord it o'er the heart of the world's lord?
Myr. Were you the lord of twice ten thousand worlds —
As you are like to lose the one you sway'd —
I did abase myself as much in being
Your paramour, as though you were a peasant —
Nay, more, if that the peasant were a Greek.
Sar. You talk it well ——
Myr. And truly.
Sar. In the hour
Of man's adversity all things grow daring
Against the falling; but as I am not
Quite fall'n, nor now disposed to bear reproaches,
Perhaps because I merit them too often,
Let us then part while peace is still between us.
Myr. Part!
Sar. Have not all past human beings parted,
And must not all the present one day part?
Myr. Why?
Sar. For your safety, which I will have look'd to,
With a strong escort to your native land;
And such gifts, as, if you had not been all
A queen, shall make your dowry worth a kingdom.
Myr. I pray you talk not thus.
Sar. The queen is gone:
You need not shame to follow. I would fall
Alone — I seek no partners but in pleasure.
Myr. And I no pleasure but in parting not.
You shall not force me from you.
Sar. Think well of it —
It soon may be too late.

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Myr. So let it be;
For then you cannot separate me from you.
Sar. And will not; but I thought you wish'd it.
Myr. I!
Sar. You spoke of your abasement.
Myr. And I feel it
Deeply — more deeply than all things but love.
Sar. Then fly from it.
Myr. 'T will not recall the past —
'T will not restore my honour, nor my heart.
No — here I stand or fall. If that you conquer,
I live to joy in your great triumph: should
Your lot be different, I 'll not weep, but share it.
You did not doubt me a few hours ago.
Sar. Your courage never — nor your love till now;
And none could make me doubt it save yourself.
Those words ——
Myr. Were words. I pray you, let the proofs
Be in the past acts you were pleased to praise
This very night, and in my further bearing,
Beside, wherever you are borne by fate.
Sar. I am content: and, trusting in my cause,
Think we may yet be victors and return
To peace — the only victory I covet.
To me war is no glory — conquest no
Renown. To be forced thus to uphold my right
Sits heavier on my heart than all the wrongs
These men would bow me down with. Never, never
Can I forget this night, even should I live
To add it to the memory of others.
I thought to have made mine inoffensive rule
An era of sweet peace 'midst bloody annals,
A green spot amidst desert centuries,
On which the future would turn back and smile,
And cultivate, or sigh when it could not
Recall Sardanapalus' golden reign.
I thought to have made my realm a paradise,
And every moon an epoch of new pleasures.
I took the rabble's shouts for love — the breath
Of friends for truth — the lips of woman for
My only guerdon — so they are, my Myrrha:
[*He kisses her.*
Kiss me. Now let them take my realm and life!
They shall have both, but never thee!
Myr. No, never!
Man may despoil his brother man of all

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That 's great or glittering — kingdoms fall — hosts yield —
Friends fail — slaves fly — and all betray — and, more
Than all, the most indebted — but a heart
That loves without self-love! 'T is here — now prove it.

Enter SALEMENES.

Sal. I sought you — How! *she* here again?
Sar. Return not
Now to reproof: methinks your aspect speaks
Of higher matter than a woman's presence.
Sal. The only woman whom it much imports me
At such a moment now is safe in absence —
The queen 's embark'd.
Sar. And well? say that much.
Sal. Yes.
Her transient weakness has pass'd o'er; at least,
It settled into tearless silence: her
Pale face and glittering eye, after a glance
Upon her sleeping children, were still fix'd
Upon the palace towers as the swift galley
Stole down the hurrying stream beneath the starlight;
But she said nothing.
Sar. Would I felt no more
Than she has said!
Sal. 'T is now too late to feel!
Your feelings cannot cancel a sole pang:
To change them, my advices bring sure tidings
That the rebellious Medes and Chaldees, marshall'd
By their two leaders, are already up
In arms again; and, serrying their ranks,
Prepare to attack: they have apparently
Been join'd by other satraps.
Sar. What! more rebels?
Let us be first, then.
Sal. That were hardly prudent
Now, though it was our first intention. If
By noon to-morrow we are join'd by those
I 've sent for by sure messengers, we shall be
In strength enough to venture an attack,
Ay, and pursuit too; but till then, my voice
Is to await the onset.
Sar. I detest
That waiting; though it seems so safe to fight
Behind high walls, and hurl down foes into
Deep fosses, or behold them sprawl on spikes

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Strew'd to receive them, still I like it not —
My soul seems lukewarm; but when I set on **them,**
Though they were piled on mountains, I would **have**
A pluck at them, or perish in hot blood! —
Let me then charge.

Sal. You talk like a young **soldier.**

Sar. I am no soldier, but a man: speak not
Of soldiership, I loathe the word, and those
Who pride themselves upon it; but direct me
Where I may pour upon them.

Sal. You must spare
To expose your life too hastily; 't is not
Like mine or any other subject's breath:
The whole war turns upon it — with it; this
Alone creates it, kindles, and may quench it —
Prolong it — end it.

Sar. Then let us end both!
'T were better thus, perhaps, than prolong either;
I 'm sick of one, perchance of both.

[*A trumpet sounds without.*

Sal. Hark!

Sar. Let us
Reply, not listen.

Sal. And your wound!

Sar. 'T is bound —
'T is heal'd — I had forgotten it. Away!
A leech's lancet would have scratch'd me deeper;
The slave that gave it might be well ashamed
To have struck so weakly.

Sal. Now, may none this hour
Strike with a better aim!

Sar. Ay, if we conquer;
But if not, they will only leave to me
A task they might have spared their king. Upon them!

[*Trumpet sounds again.*

Sal. I am with you.

Sar. Ho, my arms! again, my arms!

[*Exeunt.*

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ACT V.

SCENE I.

The same Hall in the Palace.

MYRRHA *and* BALEA.

Myr. (*at a window*). The day at last has broken. What a night
Hath usher'd it! How beautiful in heaven!
Though varied with a transitory storm,
More beautiful in that variety!
How hideous upon earth! where peace and hope,
And love and revel, in an hour were trampled
By human passions to a human chaos,
Not yet resolved to separate elements —
'T is warring still! And can the sun so rise,
So bright, so rolling back the clouds into
Vapours more lovely than the unclouded sky,
With golden pinnacles, and snowy mountains,
And billows purpler than the ocean's, making
In heaven a glorious mockery of the earth,
So like we almost deem it permanent;
So fleeting, we can scarcely call it aught
Beyond a vision, 't is so transiently
Scatter'd along the eternal vault: and yet
It dwells upon the soul, and soothes the soul,
And blends itself into the soul, until
Sunrise and sunset form the haunted epoch
Of sorrow and of love; which they who mark not,
Know not the realms where those twin genii
(Who chasten and who purify our hearts,
So that we would not change their sweet rebukes
For all the boisterous joys that ever shook
The air with clamour) build the palaces
Where their fond votaries repose and breathe
Briefly; — but in that brief cool calm inhale
Enough of heaven to enable them to bear
The rest of common, heavy, human hours,
And dream them through in placid sufferance;
Though seemingly employ'd like all the rest
Of toiling breathers in allotted tasks

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Of pain or pleasure, *two* names for *one* feeling,
Which our internal, restless agony
Would vary in the sound, although the sense
Escapes our highest efforts to be happy.
Bal. You muse right calmly: and can you so watch
The sunrise which may be our last?
Myr. It is
Therefore that I so watch it, and reproach
Those eyes, which never may behold it more,
For having look'd upon it oft, too oft,
Without reverence and the rapture due
To that which keeps all earth from being as fragile
As I am in this form. Come, look upon it,
The Chaldee's god, which, when I gaze upon,
I grow almost a convert to your Baal.
Bal. As now he reigns in heaven, so once on earth
He sway'd.
Myr. He sways it now far more, then; never
Had earthly monarch half the peace and glory
Which centres in a single ray of his.
Bal. Surely he is a god!
Myr. So we Greeks deem too;
And yet I sometimes think that gorgeous orb
Must rather be the abode of gods than one
Of the immortal sovereigns. Now he breaks
Through all the clouds, and fills my eyes with light
That shuts the world out. I can look no more.
Bal. Hark! heard you not a sound?
Myr. No, 't was mere fancy;
They battle it beyond the wall, and not
As in late midnight conflict in the very
Chambers: the palace has become a fortress
Since that insidious hour; and here, within
The very centre, girded by vast courts
And regal halls of pyramid proportions,
Which must be carried one by one before
They penetrate to where they then arrived,
We are as much shut in even from the sound
Of peril as from glory.
Bal. But they reach'd
Thus far before.
Myr. Yes, by surprise, and were
Beat back by valour: now at once we have
Courage and vigilance to guard us.
Bal. May they
Prosper!

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Myr. That is the prayer of many, and
The dread of more: it is an anxious hour;
I strive to keep it from my thoughts. Alas!
How vainly!
Bal. It is said the king's demeanour
In the late action scarcely more appall'd
The rebels than astonish'd his true subjects.
Myr. 'T is easy to astonish or appal
The vulgar mass which moulds a horde of slaves;
But he did bravely.
Bal. Slew he not Beleses?
I heard the soldiers say he struck him down.
Myr. The wretch was overthrown, but rescued to
Triumph, perhaps, o'er one who vanquish'd him
In fight, as he had spared him in his peril;
And by that heedless pity risk'd a crown.
Bal. Hark!
Myr. You are right; some steps approach, but slowly.

Enter Soldiers, bearing in SALEMENES *wounded, with a broken Javelin in his Side; they seat him upon one of the Couches which furnish the Apartment.*

Myr. Oh, Jove!
Bal. Then all is over.
Sal. That is false.
Hew down the slave who says so, if a soldier.
Myr. Spare him — he 's none: a mere court butterfly,
That flutters in the pageant of a monarch.
Sal. Let him live on, then.
Myr. So wilt thou, I trust.
Sal. I fain would live this hour out, and the event,
But doubt it. Wherefore did ye bear me here?
Sol. By the king's order. When the javelin struck you,
You fell and fainted: 't was his strict command
To bear you to this hall.
Sal. 'T was not ill done:
For seeming slain in that cold dizzy trance,
The sight might shake our soldiers — but — 't is vain,
I feel it ebbing!
Myr. Let me see the wound;
I am not quite skilless: in my native land
'T is part of our instruction. War being constant,
We are nerved to look on such things.
Sol. Best extract
The javelin.

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Myr. Hold! no, no, it cannot be.
Sal. I am sped, then!
Myr. With the blood that fast must follow
The extracted weapon, I do fear thy life.
Sal. And I *not* death. Where was the king when you
Convey'd me from the spot where I was stricken?
Sol. Upon the same ground, and encouraging
With voice and gesture the dispirited troops
Who had seen you fall, and falter'd back.
Sal. Whom heard ye
Named next to the command?
Sol. I did not hear.
Sal. Fly, then, and tell him, 't was my last request
That Zames take my post until the junction,
So hoped for, yet delay'd, of Ofratanes,
Satrap of Susa. Leave me here: our troops
Are not so numerous as to spare your absence.
Sol. But prince ——
Sal. Hence, I say! Here 's a courtier and
A woman, the best chamber company.
As you would not permit me to expire
Upon the field, I 'll have no idle soldiers
About my sick couch. Hence! and do my bidding!
[*Exeunt the Soldiers.*
Myr. Gallant and glorious spirit! must the earth
So soon resign thee?
Sal. Gentle Myrrha, 't is
The end I would have chosen, had I saved
The monarch or the monarchy by this;
As 't is, I have not outlived them.
Myr. You wax paler.
Sal. Your hand; this broken weapon but prolongs
My pangs, without sustaining life enough
To make me useful: I would draw it forth
And my life with it, could I but hear how
The fight goes.

Enter SARDANAPALUS *and Soldiers.*

Sar. My best brother!
Sal. And the battle
Is lost?
Sar. (*despondingly*). You see *me here.*
Sal. I 'd rather see you *thus!*
[*He draws out the weapon from the wound, and dies.*
Sar. And *thus* I will be seen; unless the succour,
The last frail reed of our beleaguer'd hopes,

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Arrive with Ofratanes.

Myr. Did you not
Receive a token from your dying brother,
Appointing Zames chief?

Sar. I did.

Myr. Where 's Zames?

Sar. Dead.

Myr. And Altada?

Sar. Dying.

Myr. Pania? Sfero?

Sar. Pania yet lives; but Sfero 's fled or captive.
I am alone.

Myr. And is all lost?

Sar. Our walls,
Though thinly mann'd, may still hold out against
Their present force, or aught save treachery:
But i' the field ——

Myr. I thought 't was the intent
Of Salemenes not to risk a sally
Till ye were strengthen'd by the expected succours.

Sar. *I* over-ruled him.

Myr. Well, the fault 's a brave one.

Sar. But fatal. Oh, my brother! I would give
These realms, of which thou wert the ornament,
The sword and shield, the sole-redeeming honour,
To call back —— But I will not weep for thee;
Thou shalt be mourn'd for as thou wouldst be mourn'd.
It grieves me most that thou couldst quit this life
Believing that I could survive what thou
Hast died for — our long royalty of race.
If I redeem it, I will give thee blood
Of thousands, tears of millions, for atonement
(The tears of all the good are thine already).
If not, we meet again soon, — if the spirit
Within us lives beyond: — thou readest mine,
And dost me justice now. Let me once clasp
That yet warm hand, and fold that throbless heart
[*Embraces the body.*
To this which beats so bitterly. Now, bear
The body hence.

Soldier. Where?

Sar. To my proper chamber.
Place it beneath my canopy, as though
The king lay there: when this is done, we will
Speak further of the rites due to such ashes.

[*Exeunt Soldiers with the body of* SALEMENES.

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Enter PANIA.

Sar. Well, Pania! have you placed the guards, and issued
The orders fix'd on?
Pan. Sire, I have obey'd.
Sar. And do the soldiers keep their hearts up?
Pan. Sire?
Sar. I 'm answer'd! When a king asks twice, and has
A question as an answer to *his* question,
It is a portent. Why! they are dishearten'd?
Pan. The death of Salemenes, and the shouts
Of the exulting rebels on his fall,
Have made them ——
Sar. *Rage* — not droop — it should have been.
We 'll find the means to rouse them.
Pan. Such a loss
Might sadden even a victory.
Sar. Alas!
Who can so feel it as I feel? but yet,
Though coop'd within these walls, they are strong, and we
Have those without will break their way through hosts,
To make their sovereign's dwelling what it was —
A palace; not a prison, nor a fortress.

Enter an Officer, hastily.

Sar. Thy face seems ominous. Speak!
Offi. I dare not.
Sar. Dare not?
While millions dare revolt with sword in hand!
That 's strange. I pray thee break that loyal silence
Which loathes to shock its sovereign; we can hear
Worse than thou hast to tell.
Pan. Proceed, thou hearest.
Offi. The wall which skirted near the river's brink
Is thrown down by the sudden inundation
Of the Euphrates, which now rolling, swoln
From the enormous mountains where it rises,
By the late rains of that tempestuous region,
O'erfloods its banks, and hath destroy'd the bulwark.
Pan. That 's a black augury! it has been said
For ages, "That the city ne'er should yield
To man, until the river grew its foe."
Sar. I can forgive the omen, not the ravage.

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How much is swept down of the wall?
Offi. About
Some twenty stadii.
Sar. And all this is left
Pervious to the assailants?
Offi. For the present
The river's fury must impede the assault;
But when he shrinks into his wonted channel,
And may be cross'd by the accustom'd barks,
The palace is their own.
Sar. That shall be never.
Though men, and gods, and elements, and omens,
Have risen up 'gainst one who ne'er provoked them,
My father's house shall never be a cave
For wolves to horde and howl in.
Pan. With your sanction,
I will proceed to the spot, and take such measures
For the assurance of the vacant space
As time and means permit.
Sar. About it straight,
And bring me back, as speedily as full
And fair investigation may permit,
Report of the true state of this irruption
Of waters. [*Exeunt* PANIA *and the Officer*
Myr. Thus the very waves rise up
Against you.
Sar. They are not my subjects, girl,
And may be pardon'd, since they can't be punish'd.
Myr. I joy to see this portent shakes you not.
Sar. I am past the fear of portents: they can tell me
Nothing I have not told myself since midnight:
Despair anticipates such things.
Myr. Despair!
Sar. No; not despair precisely. When we know
All that can come, and how to meet it, our
Resolves, if firm, may merit a more noble
Word than this is to give it utterance.
But what are words to us? we have well nigh done
With them and all things.
Myr. Save *one deed* — the last
And greatest to all mortals; crowning act
Of all that was — or is — or is to be —
The only thing common to all mankind,
So different in their births, tongues, sexes, natures,
Hues, features, climes, times, feelings, intellects,
Without one point of union save in this,

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To which we tend, for which we 're born, and thread
The labyrinth of mystery, call'd life.
Sar. Our clew being well nigh wound out, let 's be cheerful.
They who have nothing more to fear may well
Indulge a smile at that which once appall'd;
As children at discover'd bugbears.

Re-enter PANIA.

Pan. 'T is
As was reported: I have order'd there
A double guard, withdrawing from the wall
Where it was strongest the required addition
To watch the breach occasion'd by the waters.
Sar. You have done your duty faithfully, and as
My worthy Pania! further ties between us
Draw near a close. I pray you take this key:
[*Gives a key.*
It opens to a secret chamber, placed
Behind the couch in my own chamber. (Now
Press'd by a nobler weight than e'er it bore —
Though a long line of sovereigns have lain down
Along its golden frame — as bearing for
A time what late was Salemenes.) Search
The secret covert to which this will lead you;
'T is full of treasure; take it for yourself
And your companions: there 's enough to load ye,
Though ye be many. Let the slaves be freed, too;
And all the inmates of the palace, of
Whatever sex, now quit it in an hour
Thence launch the regal barks, once form'd for pleasure
And now to serve for safety, and embark.
The river 's broad and swoln, and uncommanded
(More potent than a king) by these besiegers.
Fly! and be happy!
Pan. Under your protection!
So you accompany your faithful guard.
Sar. No, Pania! that must not be; get thee hence,
And leave me to my fate.
Pan. 'T is the first time
I ever disobey'd: but now ——
Sar. So all men
Dare beard me now, and Insolence within
Apes Treason from without. Question no further;
'T is my command, my last command. Wilt *thou*
Oppose it? *thou!*

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Pan. But yet — not yet.
Sar. Well, then,
Swear that you will obey when I shall give
The signal.
Pan. With a heavy but true heart,
I promise.
Sar. 'T is enough. Now order here
Faggots, pine-nuts, and wither'd leaves, and such
Things as catch fire and blaze with one sole spark;
Bring cedar, too, and precious drugs, and spices
And mighty planks, to nourish a tall pile;
Bring frankincense and myrrh, too, for it is
For a great sacrifice I build the pyre;
And heap them round yon throne.
Pan. My lord!
Sar. I have said it,
And *you* have *sworn*.
Pan. And could keep my faith
Without a vow. [*Exit* PANIA.
Myr. What mean you?
Sar. You shall know
Anon — what the whole earth shall ne'er forget.

PANIA, *returning with a Herald.*

Pan. My king, in going forth upon my duty,
This herald has been brought before me, craving
An audience.
Sar. Let him speak.
Her. The *King* Arbaces ——
Sar. What, crown'd already? — But, proceed.
Her. Beleses,
The anointed high-priest ——
Sar. Of what god or demon?
With new kings rise new altars. But, proceed;
You are sent to prate your master's will, and not
Reply to mine.
Her. And Satrap Ofratanes ——
Sar. Why, *he* is *ours*.
Her. (*showing a ring.*) Be sure that he is now
In the camp of the conquerors; behold
His signet ring.
Sar. 'T is his. A worthy triad!
Poor Salemenes! thou hast died in time
To see one treachery the less: this man
Was thy true friend and my most trusted subject.

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Proceed.

Her. They offer thee thy life, and freedom
Of choice to single out a residence
In any of the further provinces,
Guarded and watch'd, but not confined in person,
Where thou shalt pass thy days in peace; but on
Condition that the three young princes are
Given up as hostages.

Sar. (*Ironically*). The generous victors!

Her. I wait the answer.

Sar. Answer, slave! How long
Have slaves decided on the doom of kings?

Her. Since they were free.

Sar. Mouthpiece of mutiny!
Thou at the least shalt learn the penalty
Of treason, though its proxy only. Pania!
Let his head be thrown from our walls within
The rebels' lines, his carcass down the river.
Away with him! [PANIA *and the Guards seizing him.*

Pan. I never yet obey'd
Your orders with more pleasure than the present.
Hence with him, soldiers! do not soil this hall
Of royalty with treasonable gore;
Put him to rest without.

Her. A single word:
My office, king, is sacred.

Sar. And what 's *mine?*
That thou shouldst come and dare to ask of me
To lay it down?

Her. I but obey'd my orders,
At the same peril if refused, as now
Incurr'd by my obedience.

Sar. So there are
New monarchs of an hour's growth as despotic
As sovereigns swathed in purple, and enthroned
From birth to manhood!

Her. My life waits your breath.
Yours (I speak humbly) — but it may be — yours
May also be in danger scarce less imminent:
Would it then suit the last hours of a line
Such as is that of Nimrod, to destroy
A peaceful herald, unarm'd, in his office;
And violate not only all that man
Holds sacred between man and man — but that
More holy tie which links us with the gods?

Sar. He 's right. — Let him go free. — My life's last act

Shall not be one of wrath. Here, fellow, take
[*Gives him a golden cup from a table near.*
This golden goblet, let it hold your wine,
And think of *me*; or melt it into ingots,
And think of nothing but their weight and value.
Her. I thank you doubly for my life, and this
Most gorgeous gift, which renders it more precious.
But must I bear no answer?
Sar. Yes, — I ask
An hour's truce to consider.
Her. But an hour's?
Sar. An hour's: if at the expiration of
That time your masters hear no further from me,
They are to deem that I reject their terms,
And act befittingly.
Her. I shall not fail
To be a faithful legate of your pleasure.
Sar. And hark! a word more.
Her. I shall not forget it,
Whate'er it be.
Sar. Commend me to Beleses;
And tell him, ere a year expire, I summon
Him hence to meet me.
Her. Where?
Sar. At Babylon.
At least from thence he will depart to meet me.
Her. I shall obey you to the letter. [*Exit Herald.*
Sar. Pania! —
Now, my good Pania! — quick — with what I order'd.
Pan. My lord, — the soldiers are already charged.
And, see! they enter.
[*Soldiers enter, and form a Pile about the Throne, &c.*
Sar. Higher, my good soldiers,
And thicker yet; and see that the foundation
Be such as will not speedily exhaust
Its own too subtle flame; nor yet be quench'd
With aught officious aid would bring to quell it.
Let the throne form the *core* of it; I would not
Leave that, save fraught with fire unquenchable,
To the new comers. Frame the whole as if
'T were to enkindle the strong tower of our
Inveterate enemies. Now it bears an aspect!
How say you, Pania, will this pile suffice
For a king's obsequies?
Pan. Ay, for a kingdom's.
I understand you, now.

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Sar. And blame me?
Pan. No —
Let me but fire the pile, and share it with you.
Myr. That duty 's mine.
Pan. A woman's!
Myr. 'T is the soldier's
Part to die *for* his sovereign, and why not
The woman's with her lover?
Pan. 'T is most strange!
Myr. But not so rare, my Pania, as thou think'st it.
In the mean time, live thou. — Farewell! the pile
Is ready.
Pan. I should shame to leave my sovereign
With but a single female to partake
His death.
Sar. Too many far have heralded
Me to the dust, already. Get thee hence;
Enrich thee.
Pan. And live wretched!
Sar. Think upon
Thy vow: — 't is sacred and irrevocable.
Pan. Since it is so, farewell.
Sar. Search well my chamber,
Feel no remorse at bearing off the gold;
Remember, what you leave you leave the slaves
Who slew me: and when you have borne away
All safe off to your boats, blow one long blast
Upon the trumpet as you quit the palace.
The river's brink is too remote, its stream
Too loud at present to permit the echo
To reach distinctly from its banks. Then fly, —
And as you sail, turn back; but still keep on
Your way along the Euphrates: if you reach
The land of Paphlagonia, where the queen
Is safe with my three sons in Cotta's court,
Say, what you *saw* at parting, and request
That she remember what I *said* at one
Parting more mournful still.
Pan. That royal hand!
Let me then once more press it to my lips;
And these poor soldiers who throng round you, and
Would fain die with you!

[*The Soldiers and* PANIA *throng round him, kissing his hand and the hem of his robe.*

Sar. My best! my last friends!
Let 's not unman each other: part at once:

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All farewells should be sudden, when for ever,
Else they make an eternity of moments,
And clog the last sad sands of life with tears.
Hence, and be happy: trust me, I am not
Now to be pitied; or far more for what
Is past than present; — for the future, 't is
In the hands of the deities, if such
There be: I shall know soon. Farewell — Farewell.
[*Exeunt* PANIA *and Soldiers.*

Myr. These men were honest: it is comfort still
That our last looks should be on loving faces.

Sar. And *lovely* ones, my beautiful! — but hear me!
If at this moment, for we now are on
The brink, — thou feel'st an inward shrinking from
This leap through flame into the future, say it:
I shall not love thee less; nay, perhaps more,
For yielding to thy nature: and there 's time
Yet for thee to escape hence.

Myr. Shall I light
One of the torches which lie heap'd beneath
The over-burning lamp that burns without,
Before Baal's shrine, in the adjoining hall?

Sar. Do so. Is that thy answer?

Myr. Thou shalt see.
[*Exit* MYRRHA.

Sar. (*solus*). She 's firm. My fathers! whom I will rejoin,
It may be, purified by death from some
Of the gross stains of too material being,
I would not leave your ancient first abode
To the defilement of usurping bondmen;
If I have not kept your inheritance
As ye bequeath'd it, this bright part of it,
Your treasure, your abode, your sacred relics
Of arms, and records, monuments, and spoils,
In which *they* would have revell'd, I bear with me
To you in that absorbing element,
Which most personifies the soul as leaving
The least of matter unconsumed before
Its fiery workings: — and the light of this
Most royal of funereal pyres shall be
Not a mere pillar form'd of cloud and flame,
A beacon in the horizon for a day,
And then a mount of ashes, but a light
To lesson ages, rebel nations, and
Voluptuous princes. Time shall quench full many

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A people's records, and a hero's acts;
Sweep empire after empire, like this first
Of empires, into nothing; but even then
Shall spare this deed of mine, and hold it up
A problem few dare imitate, and none
Despise — but, it may be, avoid the life
Which led to such a consummation.

MYRRHA *returns with a lighted Torch in one Hand, and a Cup in the other.*

Myr. Lo!
I 've lit the lamp which lights us to the stars.
Sar. And the cup?
Myr. 'T is my country's custom to
Make a libation to the gods.
Sar. And mine
To make libations amongst men. I 've not
Forgot the custom; and although alone,
Will drain one draught in memory of many
A joyous banquet past.
[SARDANAPALUS *takes the cup, and after drinking and tinkling the reversed cup, as a drop falls, exclaims* —
And this libation
Is for the excellent Beleses.
Myr. Why
Dwells thy mind rather upon that man's name
Than on his mate's in villany?
Sar. The other
Is a mere soldier, a mere tool, a kind
Of human sword in a friend's hand; the other
Is master-mover of his warlike puppet:
But I dismiss them from my mind. — Yet pause,
My Myrrha! dost thou truly follow me,
Freely and fearlessly?
Myr. And dost thou think
A Greek girl dare not do for love, that which
An Indian widow braves for custom?
Sar. Then
We but await the signal:
Myr. It is long
In sounding.
Sar. Now, farewell; one last embrace.
Myr. Embrace, but *nor* the last; there is one more.
Sar. True, the commingling fire will mix our ashes.

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Myr. And pure as is my love to thee, shall they,
Purged from the dross of earth, and earthly passion,
Mix pale with thine. A single thought yet irks me.
Sar. Say it.
Myr. It is that no kind hand will gather
The dust of both into one urn.
Sar. The better:
Rather let them be borne abroad upon
The winds of heaven, and scatter'd into air,
Than be polluted more by human hands
Of slaves and traitors. In this blazing palace,
And its enormous walls of reeking ruin,
We leave a nobler monument than Egypt
Hath piled in her brick mountains, o'er dead kings,
Or *kine*, for none know whether those proud piles
Be for their monarch, or their ox-god Apis:
So much for monuments that have forgotten
Their very record!
Myr. Then farewell, thou earth!
And loveliest spot of earth! farewell, Ionia!
Be thou still free and beautiful, and far
Aloof from desolation! My last prayer
Was for thee, my last thoughts, save *one*, were of thee!
Sar. And that?
Myr. Is yours.
[*The trumpet of* PANIA *sounds without.*
Sar. Hark!
Myr. *Now!*
Sar. Adieu, Assyria!
I loved thee well, my own, my fathers' land,
And better as my country than my kingdom.
I sated thee with peace and joys; and this
Is my reward! and now I owe thee nothing,
Not even a grave. [*He mounts the pile.*
Now, Myrrha!
Myr. Art thou ready?
Sar. As the torch in thy grasp. [MYRRHA *fires the pile.*
Myr. 'T is fired! I come.
[*As* MYRRHA *springs forward to throw herself into the flames, the Curtain falls.*

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THE TWO FOSCARI,

AN HISTORICAL TRAGEDY.

The *father* softens, but the *governor*'s resolved.—CRITIC.

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DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

FRANCIS FOSCARI, *Doge of Venice.*
JACOPO FOSCARI, *Son of the Doge.*
JAMES LOREDANO, *a Patrician.*
MARCO MEMMO, *a Chief of the Forty.*
BARBARIGO, *a Senator.*
Other Senators, The Council of Ten, Guards, Attendants, &c. &c.

WOMAN.

MARINA, *Wife of young* FOSCARI.

SCENE — the Ducal Palace, Venice.

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THE

TWO FOSCARI.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

A Hall in the Ducal Palace.

Enter LOREDANO *and* BARBARIGO, *meeting.*

Lor. WHERE is the prisoner?
Bar. Reposing from
The Question.
Lor. The hour 's past — fix'd yesterday
For the resumption of his trial. — Let us
Rejoin our colleagues in the council, and
Urge his recall.
Bar. Nay, let him profit by
A few brief minutes for his tortured limbs;
He was o'erwrought by the Question yesterday,
And may die under it if now repeated.
Lor. Well?
Bar. I yield not to you in love of justice,
Or hate of the ambitious Foscari,
Father and son, and all their noxious race;
But the poor wretch has suffer'd beyond nature's
Most stoical endurance.
Lor. Without owning
His crime?
Bar. Perhaps without committing any.
But he avow'd the letter to the Duke
Of Milan, and his sufferings half atone for
Such weakness.
Lor. We shall see
Bar. You, Loredano,
Pursue hereditary hate too far.
Lor. How far?

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Bar. To extermination.
Lor. When they are
Extinct, you may say this. — Let 's in to council.
Bar. Yet pause — the number of our colleagues is not
Complete yet; two are wanting ere we can
Proceed.
Lor. And the chief judge, the Doge?
Bar. No — he,
With more than Roman fortitude, is ever
First at the board in this unhappy process
Against his last and only son.
Lor. True — true —
His *last*.
Bar. Will nothing move you?
Lor. *Feels he*, think you?
Bar. He shows it not.
Lor. I have mark'd *that* — the wretch!
Bar. But yesterday, I hear, on his return
To the ducal chambers, as he pass'd the threshold
The old man fainted.
Lor. It begins to work, then.
Bar. The work is half your own.
Lor. And should be *all* mine —
My father and my uncle are no more.
Bar. I have read their epitaph, which says they died
By poison.
Lor. When the Doge declared that he
Should never deem himself a sovereign till
The death of Peter Loredano, both
The brothers sicken'd shortly: — he *is* sovereign.
Bar. A wretched one.
Lor. What should they be who make
Orphans?
Bar. But *did* the Doge make you so?
Lor. Yes.
Bar. What solid proofs?
Lor. When princes set themselves
To work in secret, proofs and process are
Alike made difficult; but I have such
Of the first, as shall make the second needless.
Bar. But you will move by law?
Lor. By all the laws
Which he would leave us.
Bar. They are such in this
Our state as render retribution easier
Than 'mongst remoter nations. Is it true

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That you have written in your books of commerce,
(The wealthy practice of our highest nobles)
" Doge Foscari, my debtor for the deaths
Of Marco and Pietro Loredano,
My sire and uncle? "
Lor. It is written thus.
Bar. And will you leave it unerased?
Lor. Till balanced.
Bar. And how?
[*Two Senators pass over the stage, as in their way to " the Hall of the Council of Ten."*
Lor. You see the number is complete.
Follow me. [*Exit* LOREDANO.
Bar. (*solus*). Follow *thee!* I have follow'd long
Thy path of desolation, as the wave
Sweeps after that before it, alike whelming
The wreck that creaks to the wild winds, and wretch
Who shrieks within its riven ribs, as gush
The waters through them; but this son and sire
Might move the elements to pause, and yet
Must I on hardily like them — Oh! would
I could as blindly and remorselessly! —
Lo, where he comes! — Be still, my heart! they are
Thy foes, must be thy victims: wilt thou beat
For those who almost broke thee?

Enter Guards, with young FOSCARI *as prisoner, &c.*
Guard. Let him rest.
Signor, take time.
Jac. Fos. I thank thee, friend, I 'm feeble;
But thou may'st stand reproved.
Guard. I 'll stand the hazard.
Jac. Fos. That 's kind: — I meet some pity, but no mercy:
This is the first.
Guard. And might be last, did they
Who rule behold us.
Bar. (*advancing to the Guard.*) There is one who does:
Yet fear not; I will neither be thy judge
Nor thy accuser; though the hour is past,
Wait their last summons — I am of " the Ten,"
And waiting for that summons, sanction you
Even by my presence: when the last call sounds,
We 'll in together. — Look well to the prisoner!
Jac. Fos. What voice is that? — 'T is Barbarigo's! Ah!
Our house's foe, and one of my few judges.

Bar. To balance such a foe, if such there be,
Thy father sits amongst thy judges.
Jac. Fos. True,
He judges.
Bar. Then deem not the laws too harsh
Which yield so much indulgence to a sire
As to allow his voice in such high matter
As the state's safety ——
Jac. Fos. And his son's. I 'm faint;
Let me approach, I pray you, for a breath
Of air, yon window which o'erlooks the waters.

Enter an Officer, who whispers BARBARIGO.

Bar. (*to the Guard.*) Let him approach. I must not speak with him
Further than thus: I have transgress'd my duty
In this brief parley, and must now redeem it
Within the Council Chamber. [*Exit* BARBARIGO.
[*Guard conducting* JACOPO FOSCARI *to the window.*
Guard. There, sir, 't is
Open — How feel you?
Jac. Fos. Like a boy — Oh Venice!
Guard. And your limbs?
Jac. Fos. Limbs! how often have they borne me
Bounding o'er yon blue tide, as I have skimm'd
The gondola along in childish race,
And, masqued as a young gondolier, amidst
My gay competitors, noble as I,
Raced for our pleasure, in the pride of strength;
While the fair populace of crowding beauties,
Plebeian as patrician, cheer'd us on
With dazzling smiles, and wishes audible,
And waving kerchiefs, and applauding hands,
Even to the goal! — How many a time have I
Cloven with arm still lustier, breast more daring,
The wave all roughen'd; with a swimmer's stroke
Flinging the billows back from my drench'd hair,
And laughing from my lip the audacious brine,
Which kiss'd it like a wine-cup, rising o'er
The waves as they arose, and prouder still
The loftier they uplifted me; and oft,
In wantonness of spirit, plunging down
Into their green and glassy gulfs, and making
My way to shells and sea-weed, all unseen
By those above, till they wax'd fearful; then
Returning with my grasp full of such tokens

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As show'd that I had search'd the deep: exulting,
With a far-dashing stroke, and drawing deep
The long-suspended breath, again I spurn'd
The foam which broke around me, and pursued
My track like a sea-bird.— I was a boy then.
Guard. Be a man now: there never was more need
Of manhood's strength.
Jac. Fos. (*looking from the lattice*). My beautiful, my own,
My only Venice — *this is breath!* Thy breeze,
Thine Adrian sea-breeze, how it fans my face!
Thy very winds feel native to my veins,
And cool them into calmness! How unlike
The hot gales of the horrid Cyclades,
Which howl'd about my Candiote dungeon, and
Made my heart sick.
Guard. I see the colour comes
Back to your cheek: Heaven send you strength to bear
What more may be imposed! — I dread to think on't.
Jac. Fos. They will not banish me again? — No — no,
Let them wring on; I am strong yet.
Guard. Confess,
And the rack will be spared you
Jac. Fos. I confess'd
Once — twice before: both times they exiled me.
Guard. And the third time will slay you.
Jac. Fos. Let them do so,
So I be buried in my birth-place: better
Be ashes here than aught that lives elsewhere.
Guard. And can you so much love the soil which hates you?
Jac. Fos. The soil! — Oh no, it is the seed of the soil
Which persecutes me; but my native earth
Will take me as a mother to her arms.
I ask no more than a Venetian grave,
A dungeon, what they will, so it be here.

Enter an Officer.

Offi. Bring in the prisoner!
Guard. Signor, you hear the order.
Jac. Fos. Ay, I am used to such a summons; 't is
The third time they have tortured me: — then lend me
Thine arm. [*To the Guard.*
Offi. Take mine, sir; 't is my duty to
Be nearest to your person.

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Jac. Fos. You! — you are he
Who yesterday presided o'er my pangs —
Away! — I'll walk alone.
Offi. As you please, signor;
The sentence was not of my signing, but
I dared not disobey the Council when
They ——
Jac. Fos. Bade thee stretch me on their horrid engine.
I pray thee touch me not — that is, just now;
The time will come they will renew that order,
But keep off from me till 't is issued. As
I look upon thy hands my curdling limbs
Quiver with the anticipated wrenching,
And the cold drops strain through my brow, as if ——
But onward — I have borne it — I can bear it.—
How looks my father?
Offi. With his wonted aspect.
Jac. Fos. So does the earth, and sky, the blue of ocean,
The brightness of our city, and her domes,
The mirth of her Piazza, even now
Its merry hum of nations pierces here,
Even here, into these chambers of the unknown
Who govern, and the unknown and the unnumber'd
Judged and destroy'd in silence, — all things wear
The self-same aspect, to my very sire!
Nothing can sympathise with Foscari,
Not even a Foscari.— Sir, I attend you.

[*Exeunt* JACOPO FOSCARI, *Officer, &c.*

Enter MEMMO *and another Senator.*

Mem. He 's gone — we are too late: — think you "the Ten"
Will sit for any length of time to-day?
Sen. They say the prisoner is most obdurate,
Persisting in his first avowal; but
More I know not.
Mem. And that is much; the secrets
Of yon terrific chamber are as hidden
From us, the premier nobles of the state,
As from the people.
Sen. Save the wonted rumours,
Which, like the tales of spectres — that are rife
Near ruin'd buildings — never have been proved,
Nor wholly disbelieved: men know as little
Of the state's real acts as of the grave's
Unfathom'd mysteries.

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Mem. But with length of time
We gain a step in knowledge, and I look
Forward to be one day of the decemvirs.
Sen. Or Doge?
Mem. Why, no; not if I can avoid it.
Sen. 'T is the first station of the state, and may
Be lawfully desired, and lawfully
Attain'd by noble aspirants.
Mem. To such
I leave it; though born noble, my ambition
Is limited: I 'd rather be an unit
Of an united and imperial "Ten,"
Than shine a lonely, though a gilded cipher.—
Whom have we here? the wife of Foscari?

Enter MARINA, *with a female Attendant.*

Mar. What, no one? — I am wrong, there still are two;
But they are senators.
Mem. Most noble lady,
Command us.
Mar. *I command!* — Alas! my life
Has been one long entreaty, and a vain one.
Mem. I understand thee, but I must not answer.
Mar. (*fiercely.*) True — none dare answer here save on the rack,
Or question save those ——
Mem. (*interrupting her.*) High-born dame! bethink thee
Where thou now art.
Mar. Where I now am! — It was
My husband's father's palace.
Mem. The Duke's palace,
Mar. And his son's prison; — true, I have not forgot it;
And if there were no other nearer, bitterer
Remembrances, would thank the illustrious Memmo
For pointing out the pleasures of the palace.
Mem. Be calm!
Mar. (*looking up towards heaven.*) I am; but oh, thou eternal God!
Canst *thou* continue so, with such a world?
Mem. Thy husband yet may be absolved.
Mar. He is,
In heaven. I pray you, signor senator,
Speak not of that; you are a man of office,
So is the Doge; he has a son at stake

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Now, at this moment, and I have a husband,
Or had; they are there within, or were at least
An hour since, face to face, as judge and culprit:
Will *he* condemn *him?*

Mem. I trust not.

Mar. But if
He does not, there are those will sentence both.

Mem. They can.

Mar. And with them power and will are one
In wickedness: — my husband's lost!

Mem. Not so;
Justice is judge in Venice.

Mar. If it were so,
There now would be no Venice. But let it
Live on, so the good die not, till the hour
Of nature's summons; but "the Ten's" is quicker,
And we must wait on 't. Ah! a voice of wail!

[*A faint cry within.*

Sen. Hark!

Mem. 'T was a cry of —

Mar. No, no; not my husband's —
Not Foscari's.

Mem. The voice was —

Mar. *Not his:* no.
He shriek! No; that should be his father's part,
Not his — not his — he 'll die in silence.

[*A faint groan again within.*

Mem. What!
Again?

Mar. *His* voice! it seem'd so: I will not
Believe it. Should he shrink, I cannot cease
To love; but — no — no — no — it must have been
A fearful pang, which wrung a groan from him.

Sen. And, feeling for thy husband's wrongs, wouldst thou
Have him bear more than mortal pain, in silence?

Mar. We all must bear our tortures. I have not
Left barren the great house of Foscari,
Though they sweep both the Doge and son from life:
I have endured as much in giving life
To those who will succeed them, as they can
In leaving it: but mine were joyful pangs:
And yet they wrung me till I *could* have shriek'd,
But did not; for my hope was to bring forth
Heroes, and would not welcome them with tears.

Mem. All 's silent now.

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Mar. Perhaps all 's over; but
I will not deem it: he hath nerved himself,
And now defies them.

Enter an Officer hastily.

Mem. How now, friend, what seek you?
Offi. A leech. The prisoner has fainted.
[*Exit Officer.*
Mem. Lady,
'T were better to retire.
Sen. (*offering to assist her.*) I pray thee do so.
Mar. Off! *I* will tend him.
Mem. You! Remember, lady!
Ingress is given to none within those chambers,
Except "the Ten," and their familiars.
Mar. Well,
I know that none who enter there return
As they have enter'd — many never; but
They shall not balk my entrance.
Mem. Alas! this
Is but to expose yourself to harsh repulse,
And worse suspense.
Mar. Who shall oppose me?
Mem. They
Whose duty 't is to do so.
Mar. 'T is *their* duty
To trample on all human feelings, all
Ties which bind man to man, to emulate
The fiends who will one day requite them in
Variety of torturing! Yet I 'll pass.
Mem. It is impossible.
Mar. That shall be tried.
Despair defies even despotism: there is
That in my heart would make its way through hosts
With levell'd spears; and think you a few jailors,
Shall put me from my path? Give me, then, way;
This is the Doge's palace; I am wife
Of the Duke's son, the *innocent* Duke's son,
And they shall hear this!
Mem. It will only serve
More to exasperate his judges.
Mar. What
Are *judges* who give way to anger? they
Who do so are assassins. Give me way. [*Exit* MARINA.
Sen. Poor lady!

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Mem. 'T is mere desperation: she
Will not be admitted o'er the threshold.
Sen. And
Even if she be so, cannot save her husband.
But, see, the officer returns.
[*The Officer passes over the stage with another person.*
Mem. I hardly
Thought that "the Ten" had even this touch of pity,
Or would permit assistance to this sufferer.
Sen. Pity! Is 't pity to recall to feeling
The wretch too happy to escape to death
By the compassionate trance, poor nature's last
Resource against the tyranny of pain?
Mem. I marvel they condemn him not at once.
Sen. That 's not their policy: they 'd have him live,
Because he fears not death; and banish him,
Because all earth, except his native land,
To him is one wide prison, and each breath
Of foreign air he draws seems a slow poison,
Consuming but not killing.
Mem. Circumstance
Confirms his crimes, but he avows them not.
Sen. None, save the Letter, which he says was written,
Address'd to Milan 's duke, in the full knowledge
That it would fall into the senate's hands,
And thus he should be re-convey'd to Venice.
Mem. But as a culprit.
Sen. Yes, but to his country;
And that was all he sought, — so he avouches.
Mem. The accusation of the bribes was proved.
Sen. Not clearly, and the charge of homicide
Has been annull'd by the death-bed confession
Of Nicolas Erizzo, who slew the late
Chief of "the Ten."
Mem. Then why not clear him?
Sen. That
They ought to answer; for it is well known
That Almoro Donato, as I said,
Was slain by Erizzo for private vengeance.
Mem. There must be more in this strange process than
The apparent crimes of the accused disclose —
But here come two of "the Ten;" let us retire.
[*Exeunt* MEMMO *and Senator.*

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Enter LOREDANO *and* BARBARIGO.

Bar. (*addressing* LOR.) That were too much: believe
me, 't was not meet
The trial should go further at this moment.
Lor. And so the Council must break up, and Justice
Pause in her full career, because a woman
Breaks in on our deliberations?
Bar. No,
That 's not the cause; you saw the prisoner's state.
Lor. And had he not recover'd?
Bar. To relapse
Upon the least renewal.
Lor. 'T was not tried.
Bar. 'Tis vain to murmur; the majority
In council were against you.
Lor. Thanks to you, sir,
And the old ducal dotard, who combined
The worthy voices which o'er-ruled my own.
Bar. I am a judge; but must confess that part
Of our stern duty, which prescribes the Question,
And bids us sit and see its sharp infliction,
Makes me wish ——
Lor. What?
Bar. That *you* would *sometimes* feel,
As I do always.
Lor. Go to, you 're a child,
Infirm of feeling as of purpose, blown
About by every breath, shook by a sigh,
And melted by a tear — a precious judge
For Venice! and a worthy statesman to
Be partner in my policy!
Bar. He shed
No tears.
Lor. He cried out twice.
Bar. A saint had done so,
Even with the crown of glory in his eye,
At such inhuman artifice of pain
As was forced on him; but he did not cry
For pity; not a word nor groan escaped him,
And those two shrieks were not in supplication,
But wrung from pangs, and follow'd by no prayers.
Lor. He mutter'd many times between his teeth,
But inarticulately.
Bar. That I heard not.
You stood more near him.

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Lor. I did so.
Bar. Methought,
To my surprise too, you were touch'd with mercy,
And were the first to call out for assistance
When he was failing.
Lor. I believed that swoon
His last.
Bar. And have I not oft heard thee name
His and his father's death your nearest wish?
Lor. If he dies innocent, that is to say,
With his guilt unavow'd, he 'll be lamented.
Bar. What, wouldst thou slay his memory?
Lor. Wouldst thou have
His state descend to his children, as it must,
If he die unattainted?
Bar. War with *them* too?
Lor. With all their house, till theirs or mine are nothing.
Bar. And the deep agony of his pale wife,
And the repress'd convulsion of the high
And princely brow of his old father, which
Broke forth in a slight shuddering, though rarely,
Or in some clammy drops, soon wiped away
In stern serenity; these moved you not?
[*Exit* LOREDANO.
He 's silent in his hate, as Foscari
Was in his suffering; and the poor wretch moved me
More by his silence than a thousand outcries
Could have effected. 'T was a dreadful sight
When his distracted wife broke through into
The hall of our tribunal, and beheld
What we could scarcely look upon, long used
To such sights. I must think no more of this,
Lest I forget in this compassion for
Our foes their former injuries, and lose
The hold of vengeance Loredano plans
For him and me; but mine would be content
With lesser retribution than he thirsts for,
And I would mitigate his deeper hatred
To milder thoughts; but for the present, Foscari
Has a short hourly respite, granted at
The instance of the elders of the Council,
Moved doubtless by his wife's appearance in
The hall, and his own sufferings.— Lo! they come:
How feeble and forlorn! I cannot bear
To look on them again in this extremity:
I 'll hence, and try to soften Loredano. [*Exit* BARBARIGO.

ACT II.

SCENE I.

A Hall in the DOGE'S *Palace.*

The DOGE *and a* SENATOR.

Sen. Is it your pleasure to sign the report
Now, or postpone it till to-morrow?
Doge. Now;
I overlook'd it yesterday: it wants
Merely the signature. Give me the pen—
[*The* DOGE *sits down and signs the paper.*
There, signor.
Sen. (*looking at the paper*). You have forgot; it is not sign'd.
Doge. Not sign'd? Ah, I perceive my eyes begin
To wax more weak with age. I did not see
That I had dipp'd the pen without effect.
Sen. (*dipping the pen into the ink, and placing the paper before the* DOGE). Your hand, too, shakes, my lord: allow me, thus —
Doge. 'T is done, I thank you.
Sen. Thus the act confirm'd
By you and by "the Ten," gives peace to Venice.
Doge. 'T is long since she enjoy'd it: may it be
As long ere she resume her arms!
Sen. 'T is almost
Thirty-four years of nearly ceaseless warfare
With the Turk, or the powers of Italy;
The state had need of some repose.
Doge. No doubt:
I found her Queen of Ocean, and I leave her
Lady of Lombardy; it is a comfort
That I have added to her diadem
The gems of Brescia and Ravenna; Crema
And Bergamo no less are hers; her realm
By land has grown by thus much in my reign,
While her sea-sway has not shrunk.
Sen. 'T is most true,
And merits all our country's gratitude.

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Doge. Perhaps so.
Sen. Which should be made manifest.
Doge. I have not complain'd, sir.
Sen. My good lord, forgive me.
Doge. For what?
Sen. My heart bleeds for you.
Doge. For me, signor!
Sen. And for your ——
Doge. Stop!
Sen. It must have way, my lord:
I have too many duties towards you
And all your house, for past and present kindness,
Not to feel deeply for your son.
Doge. Was this
In your commission?
Sen. What, my lord?
Doge. This prattle
Of things you know not: but the treaty 's sign'd;
Return with it to them who sent you.
Sen. I
Obey. I had in charge, too, from the Council
That you would fix an hour for their re-union.
Doge. Say, when they will — now, even at this moment,
If it so please them: I am the state's servant.
Sen. They would accord some time for your repose.
Doge. I have no repose, that is, none which shall cause
The loss of an hour's time unto the state.
Let them meet when they will, I shall be found
Where I should be, and *what* I have been ever.
[*Exit* SENATOR.
[*The* DOGE *remains in silence.*

Enter an Attendant.

Att. Prince!
Doge. Say on.
Att. The illustrious lady Foscari
Requests an audience.
Doge. Bid her enter. Poor
Marina! [*Exit Attendant.*
[*The* DOGE *remains in silence as before*

Enter MARINA.

Mar. I have ventured, father, on
Your privacy.

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Doge. I have none from you, my child.
Command my time, when not commanded by
The state.
Mar. I wish'd to speak to you of *him*.
Doge. Your husband?
Mar. And your son.
Doge. Proceed, my daughter!
Mar. I had obtain'd permission from the "Ten"
To attend my husband for a limited number
Of hours.
Doge. You had so.
Mar. 'T is revoked.
Doge. By whom?
Mar. "The Ten." — When we had reach'd "the Bridge of Sighs,"
Which I prepared to pass with Foscari,
The gloomy guardian of that passage first
Demurr'd: a messenger was sent back to
"The Ten;" but as the court no longer sate,
And no permission had been given in writing,
I was thrust back, with the assurance that
Until that high tribunal re-assembled
The dungeon walls must still divide us.
Doge. True,
The form has been omitted in the haste
With which the court adjourn'd; and till it meets,
'T is dubious.
Mar. Till it meets! and when it meets,
They 'll torture him again; and he and *I*
Must purchase by renewal of the rack
The interview of husband and of wife,
The holiest tie beneath the heavens! — Oh God!
Dost thou see this?
Doge. Child — child ——
Mar. (*abruptly*). Call *me* not "child!"
You soon will have no children — you deserve none —
You, who can talk thus calmly of a son
In circumstances which would call forth tears
Of blood from Spartans! Though these did not weep
Their boys who died in battle, it is written
That they beheld them perish piecemeal, nor
Stretch'd forth a hand to save them?
Doge. You behold me:
I cannot weep — I would I could; but if
Each white hair on this head were a young life,
This ducal cap the diadem of earth,

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This ducal ring with which I wed the waves
A talisman to still them — I 'd give all
For him.
Mar. With less he surely might be saved.
Doge. That answer only shows you know not Venice.
Alas! how should you? she knows not herself,
In all her mystery. Hear me — they who aim
At Foscari, aim no less at his father;
The sire's destruction would not save the son;
They work by different means to the same end,
And that is —— but they have not conquer'd yet.
Mar. But they have crush'd.
Doge. Nor crush'd as yet — I live.
Mar. And your son, — how long will he live?
Doge. I trust,
For all that yet is past, as many years
And happier than his father. The rash boy,
With womanish impatience to return,
Hath ruin'd all by that detected letter:
A high crime, which I neither can deny
Nor palliate, as parent or as Duke:
Had he but borne a little, little longer
His Candiote exile, I had hopes —— he has quench'd them —
He must return.
Mar To exile?
Doge. I have said it.
Mar. And can I not go with him?
Doge. You well know
This prayer of yours was twice denied before
By the assembled "Ten," and hardly now
Will be accorded to a third request,
Since aggravated errors on the part
Of our lord renders them still more austere.
Mar. Austere? Atrocious! The old human fiends,
With one foot in the grave, with dim eyes, strange
To tears save drops of dotage, with long white
And scanty hairs, and shaking hands, and heads
As palsied as their hearts are hard, they council,
Cabal, and put men's lives out, as if life
Were no more than the feelings long extinguish'd
In their accursed bosoms.
Doge. You know not ——
Mar. I do — I do — and so should you, methinks —
That these are demons: could it be else that
Men, who have been of women born and suckled —

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Who have loved, or talk'd at least of love — have given
Their hands in sacred vows — have danced their babes
Upon their knees, perhaps have mourn'd above them —
In pain, in peril, or in death — who are,
Or were at least in seeming, human, could
Do as they have done by yours, and you yourself
You, who abet them?

Doge. I forgive this, for
You know not what you say.

Mar. *You* know it well,
And feel it nothing.

Doge. I have borne so much,
That words have ceased to shake me.

Mar. Oh, no doubt!
You have seen your son's blood flow, and your flesh shook not:
And after that, what are a woman's words?
No more than woman's tears, that they should shake you.

Doge. Woman, this clamorous grief of thine, I tell thee,
Is no more in the balance weigh'd with that
Which —— but I pity thee, my poor Marina!

Mar. Pity my husband, or I cast it from me;
Pity thy son! *Thou* pity! — 't is a word
Strange to thy heart — how came it on thy lips?

Doge. I must bear these reproaches, though they wrong me.
Couldst thou but read ——

Mar. 'T is not upon thy brow,
Nor in thine eyes, nor in thine acts, — where then
Should I behold this sympathy? or shall?

Doge. (*pointing downwards*). There!

Mar. In the earth?

Doge. To which I am tending: when
It lies upon this heart, far lightlier, though
Loaded with marble, than the thoughts which press it
Now, you will know me better.

Mar. Are you, then,
Indeed, thus to be pitied?

Doge. Pitied! None
Shall ever use that base word, with which men
Cloke their soul's hoarded triumph, as a fit one
To mingle with my name; that name shall be,
As far as I have borne it, what it was
When I received it.

Mar. But for the poor children
Of him thou canst not, or thou wilt not save,

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You were the last to bear it.
Doge. Would it were so!
Better for him he never had been born,
Better for me. — I have seen our house dishonour'd.
Mar. That 's false! A truer, nobler, trustier heart,
More loving, or more loyal, never beat
Within a human breast. I would not change
My exiled, persecuted, mangled husband,
Oppress'd but not disgraced, crush'd, overwhelm'd,
Alive, or dead, for prince or paladin
In story or in fable, with a world
To back his suit. Dishonour'd! — *he* dishonour'd!
I tell thee, Doge, 't is Venice is dishonour'd;
His name shall be her foulest, worst reproach,
For what he suffers, not for what he did.
'T is ye who are all traitors, tyrant! — ye!
Did you but love your country like this victim
Who totters back in chains to tortures, and
Submits to all things rather than to exile,
You 'd fling yourselves before him, and implore
His grace for your enormous guilt.
Doge. He was
Indeed all you have said. I better bore
The deaths of the two sons Heaven took from me,
Than Jacopo's disgrace.
Mar. That word again?
Doge. Has he not been condemn'd?
Mar. Is none but guilt so?
Doge. Time may restore his memory — I would hope so.
He was my pride, my —— but 't is useless now —
I am not given to tears, but wept for joy
When he was born: those drops were ominous.
Mar. I say he 's innocent! And were he not so,
Is our own blood and kin to shrink from us
In fatal moments?
Doge. I shrank not from him:
But I have other duties than a father's;
The state would not dispense me from those duties;
Twice I demanded it, but was refused:
They must then be fulfill'd.

Enter an Attendant.

Att. A message from
"The Ten."

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Doge. Who bears it?
Att. Noble Loredano.
Doge. He! — but admit him. [*Exit Attendant.*
Mar. Must I then retire?
Doge. Perhaps it is not requisite, if this
Concerns your husband, and if not —— Well, signor,
Your pleasure! [*To* LOREDANO *entering.*
Lor. I bear that of "the Ten."
Doge. They
Have chosen well their envoy.
Lor. 'T is *their* choice
Which leads me here.
Doge. It does their wisdom honour,
And no less to their courtesy. — Proceed.
Lor. We have decided.
Doge. We?
Lor. "The Ten" in council.
Doge. What! have they met again, and met without
Apprising me?
Lor. They wish'd to spare your feelings,
No less than age.
Doge. That 's new — when spared they either?
I thank them, notwithstanding.
Lor. You know well
That they have power to act at their discretion,
With or without the presence of the Doge.
Doge. 'T is some years since I learn'd this, long before
I became Doge, or dream'd of such advancement.
You need not school me, signor: I sate in
That council when you were a young patrician.
Lor. True, in my father's time; I have heard him and
The admiral, his brother, say as much.
Your highness may remember them; they both
Died suddenly.
Doge. And if they did so, better
So die than live on lingeringly in pain.
Lor. No doubt; yet most men like to live their days out.
Doge. And did not they?
Lor. The grave knows best: they died,
As I said, suddenly.
Doge. Is that so strange,
That you repeat the word emphatically?
Lor. So far from strange, that never was there death
In my mind half so natural as theirs.
Think *you* not so?

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Doge. What should I think of mortals?
Lor. That they have mortal foes.
Doge. I understand you;
Your sires were mine, and you are heir in all things.
Lor. You best know if I should be so.
Doge. I do.
Your fathers were my foes, and I have heard
Foul rumours were abroad; I have also read
Their epitaph, attributing their deaths
To poison. 'T is perhaps as true as most
Inscriptions upon tombs, and yet no less
A fable.
Lor. Who dares say so?
Doge. I! — 'T is true
Your fathers were mine enemies, as bitter
As their son e'er can be, and I no less
Was theirs; but I was *openly* their foe:
I never work'd by plot in council, nor
Cabal in commonwealth, nor secret means
Of practice against life by steel or drug.
The proof is, your existence.
Lor. I fear not.
Doge. You have no cause, being what I am; but were I
That you would have me thought, you long ere now
Were past the sense of fear. Hate on; I care not.
Lor. I never yet knew that a noble's life
In Venice had to dread a Doge's frown,
That is, by open means.
Doge. But I, good signor,
Am, or at least *was*, more than a mere duke,
In blood, in mind, in means; and that they know
Who dreaded to elect me, and have since
Striven all they dare to weigh me down: be sure,
Before or since that period, had I held you
At so much price as to require your absence,
A word of mine had set such spirits to work
As would have made you nothing. But in all things
I have observed the strictest reverence;
Not for the laws alone, for those *you* have strain'd
(I do not speak of *you* but as a single
Voice of the many) somewhat beyond what
I could enforce for my authority,
Were I disposed to brawl; but, as I said,
I have observed with veneration, like
A priest's for the high altar, even unto
The sacrifice of my own blood and quiet,

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Safety, and all save honour, the decrees,
The health, the pride, and welfare of the state.
And now, sir, to your business.
Lor. 'T is decreed,
That, without farther repetition of
The Question, or continuance of the trial,
Which only tends to show how stubborn guilt is,
("The Ten," dispensing with the stricter law
Which still prescribes the Question till a full
Confession, and the prisoner partly having
Avow'd his crime in not denying that
The letter to the Duke of Milan 's his),
James Foscari return to banishment,
And sail in the same galley which convey'd him.
Mar. Thank God! At least they will not drag him more
Before that horrible tribunal. Would he
But think so, to my mind the happiest doom,
Not he alone, but all who dwell here, could
Desire, were to escape from such a land.
Doge. That is not a Venetian thought, my daughter.
Mar. No, 't was too human. May I share his exile?
Lor. Of this "the Ten" said nothing.
Mar. So I thought:
That were too human, also. But it was not
Inhibited?
Lor. It was not named.
Mar. (*to the Doge*). Then, father,
Surely you can obtain or grant me thus much:
[*To* Loredano.
And you, sir, not oppose my prayer to be
Permitted to accompany my husband.
Doge. I will endeavour
Mar. And you, signor?
Lor. Lady!
'T is not for me to anticipate the pleasure
Of the tribunal.
Mar. Pleasure! what a word
To use for the decrees of——
Doge. Daughter, know you
In what a presence you pronounce these things?
Mar. A prince's and his subject's.
Lor. Subject!
Mar. Oh!
It galls you: — well; you are his equal, as
You think; but that you are not, nor would be,
Were he a peasant: — well, then, you 're a prince,

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A princely noble; and what then am I?
Lor. The offspring of a noble house.
Mar. And wedded
To one as noble. What, or whose, then, is
The presence that should silence my free thoughts?
Lor. The presence of your husband's judges.
Doge. And
The deference due even to the lightest word
That falls from those who rule in Venice.
Mar. Keep
Those maxims for your mass of scared mechanics,
Your merchants, your Dalmatian and Greek slaves,
Your tributaries, your dumb citizens,
And mask'd nobility, your sbirri, and
Your spies, your galley and your other slaves,
To whom your midnight carryings off and drownings,
Your dungeons next the palace roofs, or under
The water's level; your mysterious meetings,
And unknown dooms, and sudden executions,
Your "Bridge of Sighs," your strangling chamber, and
Your torturing instruments, have made ye seem
The beings of another and worse world!
Keep such for them: I fear ye not. I know ye;
Have known and proved your worst, in the infernal
Process of my poor husband! Treat me as
Ye treated him: — you did so, in so dealing
With him. Then what have I to fear *from* you,
Even if I were of fearful nature, which
I trust I am not?
Doge. You hear, she speaks wildly.
Mar. Not wisely, yet not wildly.
Lor. Lady! words
Utter'd within these walls I bear no further
Than to the threshold, saving such as pass
Between the Duke and me on the state's service.
Doge! have you aught in answer?
Doge. Something from
The Doge; it may be also from a parent.
Lor. My mission *here* is to the *Doge*.
Doge. Then say
The Doge will choose his own embassador,
Or state in person what is meet; and for
The father ——
Lor. I remember *mine*. — Farewell!
I kiss the hands of the illustrious lady,
And bow me to the Duke. [*Exit* Lorredano.

Mar. Are you content?
Doge. I am what you behold.
Mar. And that 's a mystery.
Doge. All things are so to mortals; who can read them
Save he who made? or, if they can, the few
And gifted spirits, who have studied long
That loathsome volume — man, and pored upon
Those black and bloody leaves, his heart and brain,
But learn a magic which recoils upon
The adept who pursues it: all the sins
We find in others, nature made our own;
All our advantages are those of fortune;
Birth, wealth, health, beauty, are her accidents,
And when we cry out against Fate, 't were well
We should remember Fortune can take nought
Save what she *gave* — the rest was nakedness,
And lusts, and appetites, and vanities,
The universal heritage, to battle
With as we may, and least in humblest stations,
Where hunger swallows all in one low want,
And the original ordinance, that man
Must sweat for his poor pittance, keeps all passions
Aloof, save fear of famine! All is low,
And false, and hollow — clay from first to last,
The prince's urn no less than potter's vessel.
Our fame is in men's breath, our lives upon
Less than their breath; our durance upon days,
Our days on seasons; our whole being on
Something which is not *us!* — So, we are slaves,
The greatest as the meanest — nothing rests
Upon our will; the will itself no less
Depends upon a straw than on a storm;
And when we think we lead, we are most led,
And still towards death, a thing which comes as much
Without our act or choice as birth, so that
Methinks we must have sinn'd in some old world,
And *this* is hell: the best is, that it is not
Eternal.
Mar. These are things we cannot judge
On earth.
Doge. And how then shall we judge each other,
Who are all earth, and I, who am call'd upon
To judge my son? I have administer'd
My country faithfully — victoriously —
I dare them to the proof, the *chart* of what
She was and is: my reign has doubled realms;

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And, in reward, the gratitude of Venice
Has left, or is about to leave, *me* single.
Mar. And Foscari? I do not think of such things,
So I be left with him.
Doge. You shall be so;
Thus much they cannot well deny.
Mar. And if
They should, I will fly with him.
Doge. That can ne'er be.
And whither would you fly?
Mar. I know not, reck not —
To Syria, Egypt, to the Ottoman —
Any where, where we might respire unfetter'd,
And live nor girt by spies, nor liable
To edicts of inquisitors of state.
Doge. What, wouldst thou have a renegade for husband,
And turn him into traitor?
Mar. He is none!
The country is the traitress, which thrusts forth
Her best and bravest from her. Tyranny
Is far the worst of treasons. Dost thou deem
None rebels except subjects? The prince who
Neglects or violates his trust is more
A brigand than the robber-chief.
Doge. I cannot
Charge me with such a breach of faith.
Mar. No; thou
Observ'st, obey'st, such laws as make old Draco's
A code of mercy by comparison.
Doge. I found the law; I did not make it. Were I
A subject, still I might find parts and portions
Fit for amendment; but as prince, I never
Would change, for the sake of my house, the charter
Left by our fathers.
Mar. Did they make it for
The ruin of their children?
Doge. Under such laws, Venice
Has risen to what she is — a state to rival
In deeds, and days, and sway, and, let me add,
In glory, (for we have had Roman spirits
Amongst us,) all that history has bequeath'd
Of Rome and Carthage in their best times, when
The people sway'd by senates.
Mar. Rather say,
Groan'd under the stern oligarchs.

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Doge. Perhaps so
But yet subdued the world: in such a state
An individual, be he richest of
Such rank as is permitted, or the meanest,
Without a name, is alike nothing, when
The policy, irrevocably tending
To one great end, must be maintain'd in vigour.
Mar. This means that you are more a Doge than father.
Doge. It means, I am more citizen than either.
If we had not for many centuries
Had thousands of such citizens, and shall,
I trust, have still such, Venice were no city.
Mar. Accursed be the city where the laws
Would stifle nature's!
Doge. Had I as many sons
As I have years, I would have given them all,
Not without feeling, but I would have given them
To the state's service, to fulfil her wishes
On the flood, in the field, or, if it must be,
As it, alas! has been, to ostracism,
Exile, or chains, or whatsoever worse
She might decree.
Mar. And this is patriotism?
To me it seems the worst barbarity.
Let me seek out my husband: the sage "Ten,"
With all its jealousy, will hardly war
So far with a weak woman as deny me
A moment's access to his dungeon.
Doge. I 'll
So far take on myself, as order that
You may be admitted.
Mar. And what shall I say
To Foscari from his father?
Doge. That he obey
The laws.
Mar. And nothing more? Will you not see him
Ere he depart? It may be the last time.
Doge. The last! — my boy! — the last time I shall see
My last of children! Tell him I will come.

[*Exeunt.*

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ACT III.

SCENE I.

The Prison of JACOPO FOSCARI.

Jac. Fos. (*solus*). No light, save yon faint gleam which shows me walls
Which never echo'd but to sorrow's sounds,
The sigh of long imprisonment, the step
Of feet on which the iron clank'd, the groan
Of death, the imprecation of despair!
And yet for this I have return'd to Venice,
With some faint hope, 't is true, that time, which wears
The marble down, had worn away the hate
Of men's hearts; but I knew them not, and here
Must I consume my own, which never beat
For Venice but with such a yearning as
The dove has for her distant nest, when wheeling
High in the air on her return to greet
Her callow breed. What letters are these which
[*Approaching the wall.*
Are scrawl'd along the inexorable wall?
Will the gleam let me trace them? Ah! the names
Of my sad predecessors in this place,
The dates of their despair, the brief words of
A grief too great for many. This stone page
Holds like an epitaph their history;
And the poor captive's tale is graven on
His dungeon barrier, like the lover's record
Upon the bark of some tall tree, which bears
His own and his beloved's name. Alas!
I recognise some names familiar to me,
And blighted like to mine, which I will add,
Fittest for such a chronicle as this,
Which only can be read, as writ, by wretches.
[*He engraves his name.*

Enter a Familiar of "the Ten."

Fam. I bring you food.
Jac. Fos. I pray you set it down;
I am past hunger: but my lips are parch'd
The water!

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Fam. There.
Jac. Fos. (*after drinking*). I thank you: I am better.
Fam. I am commanded to inform you
Your further trial is postponed.
Jac. Fos. Till when?
Fam. I know not.— It is also in my orders
That your illustrious lady be admitted.
Jac. Fos. Ah! they relent, then — I had ceased to hope it:
'T was time.

Enter MARINA.

Mar. My best beloved!
Jac. Fos. (*embracing her*). My true wife,
And only friend! What happiness!
Mar. We 'll part
No more.
Jac. Fos. How! would'st thou share a dungeon?
Mar. Ay,
The rack, the grave, all — any thing with thee,
But the tomb last of all, for there we shall
Be ignorant of each other, yet I will
Share that — all things except new separation;
It is too much to have survived the first.
How dost thou? How are those worn limbs? Alas!
Why do I ask? Thy paleness ——
Jac. Fos. 'T is the joy
Of seeing thee again so soon, and so
Without expectancy, has sent the blood
Back to my heart, and left my cheeks like thine,
For thou art pale too, my Marina!
Mar. 'T is
The gloom of this eternal cell, which never
Knew sunbeam, and the sallow sullen glare
Of the familiar's torch, which seems akin
To darkness more than light, by lending to
The dungeon vapours its bituminous smoke,
Which cloud whate'er we gaze on, even thine eyes —
No, not thine eyes — they sparkle — how they sparkle!
Jac. Fos. And thine! — but I am blinded by the torch.
Mar. As I had been without it. Couldst thou see here?
Jac. Fos. Nothing at first; but use and time had taught me
Familiarity with what was darkness;
And the gray twilight of such glimmerings as

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Glide through the crevices made by the winds
Was kinder to mine eyes than the full sun,
When gorgeously o'ergilding any towers
Save those of Venice; but a moment ere
Thou camest hither I was busy writing.

Mar. What?

Jac. Fos. My name: look, 't is there — recorded next
The name of him who here preceded me,
If dungeon dates say true.

Mar. And what of him?

Jac. Fos. The walls are silent of men's ends; they only
Seem to hint shrewdly of them. Such stern walls
Were never piled on high save o'er the dead,
Or those who soon must be so — *What of him?*
Thou askest.— What of me? may soon be ask'd,
With the like answer — doubt and dreadful surmise —
Unless thou tell'st my tale.

Mar. *I speak* of thee!

Jac. Fos. And wherefore not? All then shall speak of me:
The tyranny of silence is not lasting,
And, though events be hidden, just men's groans
Will burst all cerement, even a living grave's!
I do not *doubt* my memory, but my life;
And neither do I fear.

Mar. Thy life is safe.

Jac. Fos. And liberty?

Mar. The mind should make its own.

Jac. Fos. That has a noble sound; but 't is a sound,
A music most impressive, but too transient:
The mind is much, but is not all. The mind
Hath nerved me to endure the risk of death,
And torture positive, far worse than death,
(If death be a deep sleep), without a groan,
Or with a cry which rather shamed my judges
Than me; but 't is not all, for there are things
More woful — such as this small dungeon, where
I may breathe many years.

Mar. Alas! and this
Small dungeon is all that belongs to thee
Of this wide realm, of which thy sire is prince.

Jac. Fos. That thought would scarcely aid me to endure it.
My doom is common, many are in dungeons,
But none like mine, so near their father's palace;
But then my heart is sometimes high, and hope

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Will stream along those moted rays of light
Peopled with dusty atoms, which afford
Our only day; for, save the gaoler's torch,
And a strange firefly, which was quickly caught
Last night in yon enormous spider's net,
I ne'er saw aught here like a ray. Alas!
I know if mind may bear us up, or no,
For I have such, and shown it before men;
It sinks in solitude: my soul is social.

Mar. I will be with thee.

Jac. Fos. Ah! if it were so!
But *that* they never granted — nor will grant,
And I shall be alone: no men — no books —
Those lying likenesses of lying men.
I ask'd for even those outlines of their kind,
Which they term annals, history, what you will,
Which men bequeath as portraits, and they were
Refused me, — so these walls have been my study,
More faithful pictures of Venetian story,
With all their blank, or dismal stains, than is
The Hall not far from hence, which bears on high
Hundreds of doges, and their deeds and dates.

Mar. I come to tell thee the result of their
Last council on thy doom.

Jac. Fos. I know it — look!

[*He points to his limbs, as referring to the question which he had undergone.*

Mar. No — no — no more of that: even they relent
From that atrocity.

Jac. Fos. What then?

Mar. That you
Return to Candia.

Jac. Fos. Then my last hope 's gone.
I could endure my dungeon, for 't was Venice;
I could support the torture, there was something
In my native air that buoy'd my spirits up
Like a ship on the ocean toss'd by storms,
But proudly still bestriding the high waves,
And holding on its course; but *there*, afar,
In that accursed isle of slaves, and captives,
And unbelievers, like a stranded wreck,
My very soul seem'd mouldering in my bosom,
And piecemeal I shall perish, if remanded.

Mar. And *here?*

Jac. Fos. At once — by better means, as briefer.
What! would they even deny me my sire's sepulchre,

As well as home and heritage?

Mar. My husband!

I have sued to accompany thee hence,
And not so hopelessly. This love of thine
For an ungrateful and tyrannic soil
Is passion, and not patriotism; for me,
So I could see thee with a quiet aspect,
And the sweet freedom of the earth and air,
I would not cavil about climes or regions.
This crowd of palaces and prisons is not
A paradise; its first inhabitants
Were wretched exiles.

Jac. Fos. Well I know *how* wretched!

Mar. And yet you see how from their banishment
Before the Tartar into these salt isles,
Their antique energy of mind, all that
Remain'd of Rome for their inheritance,
Created by degrees an ocean-Rome;
And shall an evil, which so often leads
To good, depress thee thus?

Jac. Fos. Had I gone forth
From my own land, like the old patriarchs, seeking
Another region, with their flocks and herds;
Had I been cast out like the Jews from Zion,
Or like our fathers, driven by Attila
From fertile Italy, to barren islets,
I would have given some tears to my late country,
And many thoughts; but afterwards address'd
Myself, with those about me, to create
A new home and fresh state: perhaps I could
Have borne this — though I know not.

Mar. Wherefore not?

It was the lot of millions, and must be
The fate of myriads more.

Jac. Fos. Ay — we but hear
Of the survivors' toil in their new lands,
Their numbers and success; but who can number
The hearts which broke in silence of that parting,
Or after their departure; of that malady
Which calls up green and native fields to view
From the rough deep, with such identity
To the poor exile's fever'd eye, that he
Can scarcely be restrained from treading them?
That melody,† which out of tones and tunes

* The calenture. † Alluding to the Swiss air and its effects.

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Collects such pasture for the longing sorrow
Of the sad mountaineer, when far away
From his snow canopy of cliffs and clouds,
That he feeds on the sweet, but poisonous thought,
And dies. You call this *weakness!* It is strength,
I say, — the parent of all honest feeling.
He who loves not his country, can love nothing.
Mar. Obey her, then: 't is she that puts thee forth.
Jac. Fos. Ay, there it is; 't is like a mother's curse
Upon my soul — the mark is set upon me.
The exiles you speak of went forth by nations,
Their hands upheld each other by the way,
Their tents were pitch'd together — I 'm alone.
Mar. You shall be so no more — I will go with thee.
Jac. Fos. My best Marina! — and our children?
Mar. They,
I fear, by the prevention of the state's
Abhorrent policy, (which holds all ties
As threads, which may be broken at her pleasure,)
Will not be suffer'd to proceed with us.
Jac. Fos. And canst thou leave them?
Mar. Yes. With many a pang.
But — I *can* leave them, children as they are,
To teach you to be less a child. From this
Learn you to sway your feelings, when exacted
By duties paramount; and 't is our first
On earth to bear.
Jac. Fos. Have I not borne?
Mar. Too much
From tyrannous injustice, and enough
To teach you not to shrink now from a lot,
Which, as compared with what you have undergone
Of late, is mercy.
Jac. Fos. Ah! you never yet
Were far away from Venice, never saw
Her beautiful towers in the receding distance,
While every furrow of the vessel's track
Seem'd ploughing deep into your heart; you never
Saw day go down upon your native spires
So calmly with its gold and crimson glory,
And after dreaming a disturbed vision
Of them and theirs, awoke and found them not.
Mar. I will divide this with you. Let us think
Of our departure from this much-loved city,
(Since you must *love* it, as it seems,) and this
Chamber of state, her gratitude allots you.

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Our children will be cared for by the Doge,
And by my uncles: we must sail ere night.
Jac. Fos. That's sudden. Shall I not behold my father?
Mar. You will.
Jac. Fos. Where?
Mar. Here, or in the ducal chamber —
He said not which. I would that you could bear
Your exile as he bears it.
Jac. Fos. Blame him not.
I sometimes murmur for a moment; but
He could not now act otherwise. A show
Of feeling or compassion on his part
Would have but drawn upon his aged head
Suspicion from "the Ten," and upon mine
Accumulated ills.
Mar. Accumulated!
What pangs are those they have spared you?
Jac. Fos. That of leaving
Venice without beholding him or you,
Which might have been forbidden now, as 't was
Upon my former exile.
Mar. That is true,
And thus far I am also the state's debtor,
And shall be more so when I see us both
Floating on the free waves — away — away —
Be it to the earth's end, from this abhorr'd,
Unjust, and ——
Jac. Fos. Curse it not. If I am silent,
Who dares accuse my country?
Mar. Men and angels!
The blood of myriads reeking up to heaven,
The groans of slaves in chains, and men in dungeons,
Mothers, and wives, and sons, and sires, and subjects,
Held in the bondage of ten bald-heads; and
Though last, not least, *thy silence*. *Couldst thou* say
Aught in its favour, who would praise like *thee?*
Jac. Fos. Let us address us then, since so it must be,
To our departure. Who comes here?

Enter LOREDANO, *attended by Familiars.*

Lor. (*to the Familiars*). Retire,
But leave the torch. [*Exeunt the two Familiars.*
Jac. Fos. Most welcome, noble signor.
I did not deem this poor place could have drawn
Such presence hither.

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Lor. 'T is not the first time
I have visited these places.
Mar. Nor would be
The last, were all men's merits well rewarded.
Came you here to insult us, or remain
As spy upon us, or as hostage for us?
Lor. Neither are of my office, noble lady!
I am sent hither to your husband, to
Announce "the Ten's" decree.
Mar. That tenderness
Has been anticipated: it is known.
Lor. As how?
Mar. I have inform'd him, not so gently,
Doubtless, as your nice feelings would prescribe,
The indulgence of your colleagues; but he knew it.
If you come for our thanks, take them, and hence!
The dungeon gloom is deep enough without you,
And full of reptiles, not less loathsome, though
Their sting is honester.
Jas. Fos. I pray you, calm you:
What can avail such words?
Mar. To let him know
That he is known.
Lor. Let the fair dame preserve
Her sex's privilege.
Mar. I have some sons, sir,
Will one day thank you better.
Lor. You do well
To nurse them wisely. Foscari — you know
Your sentence, then?
Jac. Fos. Return to Candia?
Lor. True —
For life.
Jac. Fos. Not long.
Lor. I said — for *life*.
Jac. Fos. And I
Repeat — not long.
Lor. A year's imprisonment
In Canea — afterwards the freedom of
The whole isle.
Jac. Fos. Both the same to me: the after
Freedom as is the first imprisonment.
Is 't true my wife accompanies me?
Lor. Yes,
If she so wills it.
Mar. Who obtain'd that justice?

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Lor. One who wars not with women.
Mar. But oppresses
Men: howsoever let him have *my* thanks
For the only boon I would have ask'd or taken
From him or such as he is.
Lor. He receives them
As they are offer'd,
Mar. May they thrive with him
So much! — no more.
Jac. Fos. Is this, sir, your whole mission?
Because we have brief time for preparation,
And you perceive your presence doth disquiet
This lady, of a house noble as yours.
Mar. Nobler!
Lor. How nobler?
Mar. As more generous!
We say the "generous steed" to express the purity
Of his high blood. Thus much I 've learnt, although
Venetian, (who see few steeds save of bronze),
From those Venetians who have skimm'd the coasts
Of Egypt, and her neighbour Araby:
And why not say as soon the "*generous man?*"
If race be aught, it is in qualities
More than in years; and mine, which is as old
As yours, is better in its product, nay —
Look not so stern — but get you back, and pore
Upon your genealogic tree's most green
Of leaves and most mature of fruits, and there
Blush to find ancestors, who would have blush'd
For such a son — thou cold inveterate hater!
Jac. Fos. Again, Marina!
Mar. Again! *still*, Marina.
See you not, he comes here to glut his hate
With a last look upon our misery?
Let him partake it!
Jac. Fos. That were difficult.
Mar. Nothing more easy. He partakes it now —
Ay, he may veil beneath a marble brow
And sneering lip the pang, but he partakes it.
A few brief words of truth shame the devil's servants
No less than master: I have probed his soul
A moment, as the eternal fire, ere long,
Will reach it always. See how he shrinks from me!
With death, and chains, and exile in his hand
To scatter o'er his kind as he thinks fit;
They are his weapons, not his armour, for

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I have pierced him to the core of his cold heart.
I care not for his frowns! We can but die,
And he but live, for him the very worst
Of destinies: each day secures him more
His tempter's.
Jac. Fos. This is mere insanity.
Mar. It may be so; and *who* hath made us *mad?*
Lor. Let her go on; it irks not me.
Mar. That 's false!
You came here to enjoy a heartless triumph
Of cold looks upon manifold griefs! You came
To be sued to in vain — to mark our tears,
And hoard our groans — to gaze upon the wreck
Which you have made a prince's son — my husband;
In short, to trample on the fallen — an office
The hangman shrinks from, as all men from him!
How have you sped? We are wretched, signor, as
Your plots could make, and vengeance could desire us,
And how *feel you?*
Lor. As rocks.
Mar. By thunder blasted:
They feel not, but no less are shiver'd. Come,
Foscari; now let us go, and leave this felon,
The sole fit habitant of such a cell,
Which he has peopled often, but ne'er fitly
Till he himself shall brood in it alone.

Enter the DOGE.

Jac. Fos. My father!
Doge. (*embracing him*). Jacopo! my son — my son!
Jac. Fos. My father still! How long it is since I
Have heard thee name my name — *our* name!
Doge. My boy!
Couldst thou but know ——
Jac. Fos. I rarely, sir, have murmur'd.
Doge. I feel too much thou hast not.
Mar. Doge, look there!
[*She points to* LOREDANO.
Doge. I see the man — what mean'st thou?
Mar. Caution!
Lor. Being
The virtue which this noble lady most
May practise, she doth well to recommend it.
Mar. Wretch! 't is no virtue, but the policy
Of those who fain must deal perforce with vice:

As such I recommend it, as I would
To one whose foot was on an adder's path.
Doge. Daughter, it is superfluous; I have long
Known Loredano.
Lor. You may know him better.
Mar. Yes; *worse* he could not.
Jac. Fos. Father, let not these
Our parting hours be lost in listening to
Reproaches, which boot nothing. Is it — is it,
Indeed, our last of meetings?
Doge. You behold
These white hairs!
Jac. Fos. And I feel, besides, that mine
Will never be so white. Embrace me, father!
I loved you ever — never more than now.
Look to my children — to your last child's children:
Let them be all to you which he was once,
And never be to you what I am now.
May I not see *them* also?
Mar. No — not *here*.
Jac. Fos. They might behold their parent any where.
Mar. I would that they beheld their father in
A place which would not mingle fear with love,
To freeze their young blood in its natural current.
They have fed well, slept soft, and knew not that
Their sire was a mere hunted outlaw. Well,
I know his fate may one day be their heritage,
But let it only be their *heritage*,
And not their present fee. Their senses, though
Alive to love, are yet awake to terror;
And these vile damps, too, and yon *thick green* wave
Which floats above the place where we now stand —
A cell so far below the water's level,
Sending its pestilence through every crevice,
Might strike them: *this is not their* atmosphere,
However you — and you — and, most of all,
As worthiest — *you*, sir, noble LOREDANO!
May breathe it without prejudice.
Jac. Fos. I had not
Reflected upon this, but acquiesce.
I shall depart, then, without meeting them?
Doge. Not so: they shall await you in my chamber.
Jac. Fos. And must I leave them — *all?*
Lor. You must.
Jac. Fos. Not one
Lor. They are the state's.

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Mar. I thought they had been mine;
Lor. They are, in all maternal things.
Mar. That is,
In all things painful. If they 're sick, they will
Be left to me to tend them; should they die,
To me to bury and to mourn; but if
They live, they 'll make you soldiers, senators,
Slaves, exiles — what *you* will; or if they are
Females with portions, brides and *bribes* for nobles!
Behold the state's care for its sons and mothers!
Lor. The hour approaches, and the wind is fair.
Jac. Fos. How know you that here, where the genial wind
Ne'er blows in all its blustering freedom?
Lor. 'T was so
When I came here. The galley floats within
A bow-shot of the "Riva di Schiavoni."
Jac. Fos. Father! I pray you to precede me, and
Prepare my children to behold their father.
Doge. Be firm, my son!
Jac. Fos. I will do my endeavour.
Mar. Farewell! at least to this detested dungeon,
And him to whose good offices you owe
In part your past imprisonment.
Lor. And present
Liberation.
Doge. He speaks truth.
Jac. Fos. No doubt! but 't is
Exchange of chains for heavier chains I owe him.
He knows this, or he had not sought to change them.
But I reproach not.
Lor. The time narrows, signor.
Jac. Fos. Alas! I little thought so lingeringly
To leave abodes like this: but when I feel
That every step I take, even from this cell,
Is one away from Venice, I look back
Even on these dull damp walls, and ——
Doge. Boy! no tears.
Mar. Let them flow on: he wept not on the rack
To shame him, and they cannot shame him now.
They will relieve his heart — that too kind heart —
And I will find an hour to wipe away
Those tears, or add my own. I could weep now,
But would not gratify yon wretch so far.
Let us proceed. Doge, lead the way.
Lor. (*to the Familiar*). The torch, there!

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Mar. Yes, light us on, as to a funeral pyre,
With Loredano mourning like an heir.
Doge. My son, you are feeble; take this hand.
Jac. Fos. Alas!
Must youth support itself on age, and I
Who ought to be the prop of yours?
Lor. Take mine.
Mar. Touch it not, Foscari; 't will sting you. Signor
Stand off! be sure, that if a grasp of yours
Would raise us from the gulf wherein we are plunged,
No hand of ours would stretch itself to meet it.
Come, Foscari, take the hand the altar gave you;
It could not save, but will support you ever.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.

A Hall in the Ducal Palace.

Enter LOREDANO *and* BARBARIGO.

Bar. And have you confidence in such a project?
Lor. I have.
Bar. 'T is hard upon his years.
Lor. Say rather
Kind to relieve him from the cares of state.
Bar. 'T will break his heart.
Lor. Age has no heart to break.
He has seen his son's half broken, and, except
A start of feeling in his dungeon, never
Swerved.
Bar. In his countenance, I grant you, never;
But I have seen him sometimes in a calm
So desolate, that the most clamorous grief
Had nought to envy him within. Where is he?
Lor. In his own portion of the palace, with
His son, and the whole race of Foscaris.
Bar. Bidding farewell.
Lor. A last. As soon he shall
Bid to his dukedom.

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Bar. When embarks the son?
Lor. Forthwith — when this long leave is taken. 'T is
Time to admonish them again.
Bar. Forbear;
Retrench not from their moments.
Lor. Not I, now
We have higher business for our own. This day
Shall be the last of the old Doge's reign,
As the first of his son's last banishment,
And that is vengeance.
Bar. In my mind, too deep.
Lor. 'T is moderate — not even life for life, the rule
Denounced of retribution from all time;
They owe me still my father's and my uncle's.
Bar. Did not the Doge deny this strongly?
Lor. Doubtless.
Bar. And did not this shake your suspicion?
Lor. No.
Bar. But if this disposition should take place
By our united influence in the Council,
It must be done with all the deference
Due to his years, his station, and his deeds.
Lor. As much of ceremony as you will,
So that the thing be done. You may, for aught
I care, depute the Council on their knees,
(Like Barbarossa to the Pope,) to beg him
To have the courtesy to abdicate.
Bar. What, if he will not?
Lor. We 'll elect another,
And make him null.
Bar. But will the laws uphold us?
Lor. What laws? — "The Ten" are laws; and if they
were not,
I will be legislator in this business.
Bar. At your own peril?
Lor. There is none, I tell you,
Our powers are such.
Bar. But he has twice already
Solicited permission to retire,
And twice it was refused.
Lor. The better reason
To grant it the third time.
Bar. Unask'd?
Lor. It shows
The impression of his former instances:
If they were from his heart, he may be thankful:

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If not, 't will punish his hypocrisy.
Come, they are met by this time; let us join them,
And be *thou* fix'd in purpose for this once.
I have prepared such arguments as will not
Fail to move them, and to remove him: since
Their thoughts, their objects, have been sounded, do not
You, with your wonted scruples, teach us pause,
And all will prosper.

Bar. Could I but be certain
This is no prelude to such persecution
Of the sire as has fallen upon the son,
I would support you.

Lor. He is safe, I tell you;
His fourscore years and five may linger on
As long as he can drag them: 't is his throne
Alone is aim'd at.

Bar. But discarded princes
Are seldom long of life.

Lor. And men of eighty
More seldom still.

Bar. And why not wait these few years?

Lor. Because we have waited long enough, and he
Lived longer than enough. Hence! in to council!

[*Exeunt* LOREDANO *and* BARBARIGO.

Enter MEMMO *and a Senator.*

Sen. A summons to "the Ten!" Why so?

Mem. "The Ten"
Alone can answer; they are rarely wont
To let their thoughts anticipate their purpose
By previous proclamation. We are summon'd—
That is enough.

Sen. For them, but not for us;
I would know why.

Mem. You will know why anon,
If you obey; and, if not, you no less
Will know why you should have obey'd.

Sen. I mean not
To oppose them, *but*——

Mem. In Venice "*but*" 's a traitor.
But me no "*buts*," unless you would pass o'er
The Bridge which few repass.

Sen. I am silent.

Mem. Why
Thus hesitate? "The Ten" have call'd in aid

Of their deliberation five and twenty
Patricians of the senate — you are one,
And I another; and it seems to me
Both honour'd by the choice or chance which leads us
To mingle with a body so august.
Sen. Most true. I say no more.
Mem. As we hope, signor,
And all may honestly, (that is, all those
Of noble blood may,) one day hope to be
Decemvir, it is surely for the senate's
Chosen delegates, a school of wisdom, to
Be thus admitted, though as novices,
To view the mysteries.
Sen. Let us view them: they,
No doubt, are worth it.
Mem. Being worth our lives
If we divulge them, doubtless they are worth
Something, at least to you or me.
Sen. I sought not
A place within the sanctuary; but being
Chosen, however reluctantly so chosen,
I shall fulfil my office.
Mem. Let us not
Be latest in obeying "The Ten's" summons.
Sen. All are not met, but I am of your thought
So far — let 's in.
Mem. The earliest are most welcome
In earnest councils — we will not be least so. [*Exeunt*

Enter the DOGE, JACOPO FOSCARI, *and* MARINA.

Jac. Fos. Ah, father! though I must and will depart,
Yet — yet — I pray you to obtain for me
That I once more return unto my home,
Howe'er remote the period. Let there be
A point of time as beacon to my heart,
With any penalty annex'd they please,
But let me still return.
Doge. Son Jacopo,
Go and obey our country's will: 't is not
For us to look beyond.
Jac. Fos. But still I must
Look back. I pray you think of me.
Doge. Alas!
You ever were my dearest offspring, when
They were more numerous, nor can be less so

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Now you are last; but did the state demand
The exile of the disinterred ashes
Of your three goodly brothers, now in earth,
And their desponding shades came flitting round
To impede the act, I must no less obey
A duty, paramount to every duty.
Mar. My husband! let us on: this but prolongs
Our sorrow.
Jac. Fos. But we are not summon'd yet;
The galley's sails are not unfurl'd: — who knows?
The wind may change.
Mar. And if it do, it will not
Change *their* hearts, or your lot: the galley's oars
Will quickly clear the harbour.
Jac. Fos. O, ye elements!
Where are your storms?
Mar. In human breasts. Alas!
Will nothing calm you?
Jac. Fos. Never yet did mariner
Put up to patron saint such prayers for prosperous
And pleasant breezes, as I call upon you,
Ye tutelar saints of my own city! which
Ye love not with more holy love than I,
To lash up from the deep the Adrian waves,
And waken Auster, sovereign of the tempest!
Till the sea dash me back on my own shore
A broken corse upon the barren Lido,
Where I may mingle with the sands which skirt
The land I love, and never shall see more!
Mar. And wish you this with *me* beside you?
Jac. Fos. No —
No — not for thee, too good, too kind! May'st thou
Live long to be a mother to those children
Thy fond fidelity for a time deprives
Of such support! But for myself alone,
May all the winds of heaven howl down the Gulf,
And tear the vessel, till the mariners,
Appall'd, turn their despairing eyes on me,
As the Phenicians did on Jonah, then
Cast me out from amongst them, as an offering
To appease the waves. The billow which destroys me
Will be more merciful than man, and bear me,
Dead, but *still bear* me to a native grave.
From fishers' hands upon the desolate strand,
Which, of its thousand wrecks, hath ne'er received
One lacerated like the heart which then

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Will be — But wherefore breaks it not? why live I?
Mar. To man thyself, I trust, with time, to master
Such useless passion. Until now thou wert
A sufferer, but not a loud one: why
What is this to the things thou hast borne in silence —
Imprisonment and actual torture?
Jac. Fos. Double,
Triple, and tenfold torture! But you are right,
It must be borne. Father, your blessing.
Doge. Would
It could avail thee! but no less thou hast it.
Jac. Fos. Forgive ——
Doge. What?
Jac. Fos. My poor mother, for my birth,
And me for having lived, and you yourself
(As I forgive you), for the gift of life,
Which you bestow'd upon me as my sire.
Mar. What hast thou done?
Jac. Fos. Nothing. I cannot charge
My memory with much save sorrow: but
I have been so beyond the common lot
Chasten'd and visited, I needs must think
That I was wicked. If it be so, may
What I have undergone here keep me from
A like hereafter!
Mar. Fear not: *that* 's reserved
For your oppressors.
Jac. Fos. Let me hope not.
Mar. Hope not?
Jac. Fos. I cannot wish them *all* they have inflicted.
Mar. All! the consummate fiends! A thousand fold
May the worm which ne'er dieth feed upon them!
Jac. Fos. They may repent.
Mar. And if they do, Heaven will not
Accept the tardy penitence of demons.

Enter an Officer and Guards.

Offi. Signor! the boat is at the shore — the wind
Is rising — we are ready to attend you.
Jac. Fos. And I to be attended. Once more, father,
Your hand!
Doge. Take it. Alas! how thine own trembles!
Jac. Fos. No — you mistake; 't is yours that shakes, my father.
Farewell!

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Doge. Farewell! Is there aught else?
Jac. Fos. No — nothing.
[*To the Officer*
Lend me your arm, good signor.
Offi. You turn pale —
Let me support you — paler — ho! some aid there!
Some water!
Mar. Ah, he is dying!
Jac. Fos. Now, I'm ready —
My eyes swim strangely — where 's the door?
Mar. Away!
Let me support him — my best love! Oh, God!
How faintly beats this heart — this pulse!
Jac. Fos. The light!
Is it the light? — I am faint.
[*Officer presents him with water*
Offi. He will be better,
Perhaps, in the air.
Jac. Fos. I doubt not. Father — wife —
Your hands!
Mar. There 's death in that damp clammy grasp.
Oh God! — My Foscari, how fare you?
Jac. Fos. Well!
[*He dies.*
Offi. He 's gone!
Doge. He 's free.
Mar. No — no, he is not dead;
There must be life yet in that heart — he could not
Thus leave me.
Doge. Daughter!
Mar. Hold thy peace, old man!
I am no daughter now — thou hast no son.
Oh, Foscari!
Offi. We must remove the body.
Mar. Touch it not, dungeon miscreants! your base office
Ends with his life, and goes not beyond murder,
Even by your murderous laws. Leave his remains
To those who know to honour them.
Offi. I must
Inform the signory, and learn their pleasure.
Doge. Inform the signory, from *me*, the Doge,
They have no further power upon those ashes:
While he lived, he was theirs, as fits a subject —
Now he is *mine* — my broken-hearted boy!
[*Exit Officer.*
Mar. And I must live!

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Doge. Your children live, Marina.
Mar. My children! true — they live, and I must live
To bring them up to serve the state, and die
As died their father. Oh! what best of blessings
Were barrenness in Venice! Would my mother
Had been so!
Doge. My unhappy children!
Mar. What!
You feel it then at last — *you!* — Where is now
The stoic of the state?
Doge (*throwing himself down by the body*). *Here!*
Mar. Ay, weep on!
I thought you had no tears — you hoarded them
Until they are useless; but weep on! he never
Shall weep more — never, never more.

Enter LOREDANO *and* BARBARIGO.

Lor. What's here?
Mar. Ah! the devil come to insult the dead! Avaunt!
Incarnate Lucifer! 't is holy ground.
A martyr's ashes now lie there, which make it
A shrine. Get thee back to thy place of torment!
Bar. Lady, we knew not of this sad event,
But pass'd here merely on our path from council.
Mar. Pass on.
Lor. We sought the Doge.
Mar. (*pointing to the Doge, who is still on the ground by his son's body*). He's busy, look,
About the business *you* provided for him.
Are ye content?
Bar. We will not interrupt
A parent's sorrows.
Mar. No, ye only make them,
Then leave them.
Doge. (*rising*). Sirs, I am ready.
Bar. No — not now.
Lor. Yet 't was important.
Doge. If 't was so, I can
Only repeat — I am ready.
Bar. It shall not be
Just now, though Venice totter'd o'er the deep
Like a frail vessel. I respect your griefs.
Doge. I thank you. If the tidings which you bring
Are evil, you may say them; nothing further
Can touch me more than him thou look'st on there;

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If they be good, say on; you need not *fear*
That they can *comfort* me.
Bar. I would they could!
Doge. I spoke not to *you*, but to Loredano.
He understands me.
Mar. Ah! I thought it would be so.
Doge. What mean you?
Mar. Lo! there is the blood beginning
To flow through the dead lips of Foscari —
The body bleeds in presence of the assassin.
[*To* LOREDANO.
Thou cowardly murderer by law, behold
How death itself bears witness to thy deeds!
Doge. My child! this is a phantasy of grief.
Bear hence the body. [*To his attendants.*] Signors, if it please you,
Within an hour I'll hear you.
[*Exeunt* DOGE, MARINA, *and attendants with the body. Manent* LOREDANO *and* BARBARIGO.
Bar. He must not
Be troubled now.
Lor. He said himself that nought
Could give him trouble farther.
Bar. These are words;
But grief is lonely, and the breaking in
Upon it barbarous.
Lor. Sorrow preys upon
Its solitude, and nothing more diverts it
From its sad visions of the other world
Than calling it at moments back to this.
The busy have no time for tears.
Bar. And therefore
You would deprive this old man of all business?
Lor. The thing's decreed. The Giunta and "the Ten"
Have made it law — who shall oppose that law?
Bar. Humanity!
Lor. Because his son is dead?
Bar. And yet unburied.
Lor. Had we known this when
The act was passing, it might have suspended
Its passage, but impedes it not — once past.
Bar. I'll not consent.
Lor. You have consented to
All that's essential — leave the rest to me.
Bar. Why press his abdication now?
Lor. The feelings

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Of private passion may not interrupt
The public benefit; and what the state
Decides to-day must not give way before
To-morrow for a natural accident.
Bar. You have a son.
Lor. I *have* — and *had* a father.
Bar. Still so inexorable?
Lor. Still.
Bar. But let him
Inter his son before we press upon him
This edict.
Lor. Let him call up into life
My sire and uncle — I consent. Men may,
Even aged men, be, or appear to be,
Sires of a hundred sons, but cannot kindle
An atom of their ancestors from earth.
The victims are not equal; he has seen
His sons expire by natural deaths, and I
My sires by violent and mysterious maladies.
I used no poison, bribed no subtle master
Of the destructive art of healing, to
Shorten the path to the eternal cure.
His sons — and he had four — are dead, without
My dabbling in vile drugs.
Bar. And art thou sure
He dealt in such?
Lor. Most sure.
Bar. And yet he seems
All openness.
Lor. And so he seem'd not long
Ago to Carmagnuola.
Bar. The attainted
And foreign traitor?
Lor. Even so: when *he*,
After the very night in which "the Ten"
(Join'd with the Doge) decided his destruction,
Met the great Duke at daybreak with a jest,
Demanding whether he should augur him
"The good day or good night?" his Doge-ship answer'd,
"That he in truth had pass'd a night of vigil,
In which (he added with a gracious smile),
There often has been question about you."*
'T was true; the question was the death resolved
Of Carmagnuola, eight months ere he died;

* An historical fact.

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And the old Doge, who knew him doom'd, smiled on him
With deadly cozenage, eight long months beforehand —
Eight months of such hypocrisy as is
Learnt but in eighty years. Brave Carmagnuola
Is dead; so is young Foscari and his brethren —
I never *smiled* on *them*.

Bar. Was Carmagnuola
Your friend?

Lor. He was the safeguard of the city.
In early life its foe, but in his manhood,
Its saviour first, then victim.

Bar. Ah! that seems
The penalty of saving cities. He
Whom we now act against not only saved
Our own, but added others to her sway.

Lor. The Romans (and we ape them) gave a crown
To him who took a city; and they gave
A crown to him who saved a citizen
In battle: the rewards are equal. Now,
If we should measure forth the cities taken
By the Doge Foscari, with citizens
Destroy'd by him, or *through* him, the account
Were fearfully against him, although narrow'd
To private havoc, such as between him
And my dead father.

Bar. Are you then thus fix'd?

Lor. Why, what should change me?

Bar. That which changes me:
But you, I know, are marble to retain
A feud. But when all is accomplish'd, when
The old man is deposed, his name degraded,
His sons all dead, his family depress'd,
And you and yours triumphant, shall you sleep?

Lor. More soundly.

Bar. That 's an error, and you 'll find it
Ere you sleep with your fathers.

Lor. They sleep not
In their accelerated graves, nor will
Till Foscari fills his. Each night I see them
Stalk frowning round my couch, and, pointing towards
The ducal palace, marshal me to vengeance.

Bar. Fancy's distemperature! There is no passion
More spectral or fantastical than Hate;
Not even its opposite, Love, so peoples air
With phantoms, as this madness of the heart.

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Enter an Officer.

Lor. Where go you, sirrah?
Offi. By the ducal order
To forward the preparatory rites
For the late Foscari's interment.
Bar. Their
Vault has been often open'd of late years.
Lor. 'T will be full soon, and may be closed for ever.
Offi. May I pass on?
Lor. You may.
Bar. How bears the Doge
This last calamity?
Offi. With desperate firmness,
In presence of another he says little,
But I perceive his lips move now and then;
And once or twice I heard him, from the adjoining
Apartment mutter forth the words — "My son!"
Scarce audibly. I must proceed. [*Exit Officer.*
Bar. This stroke
Will move all Venice in his favour.
Lor. Right!
We must be speedy: let us call together
The delegates appointed to convey
The council's resolution.
Bar. I protest
Against it at this moment.
Lor. As you please —
I 'll take their voices on it ne'ertheless,
And see whose most may sway them, yours or mine.
[*Exeunt* BARBARIGO *and* LOREDANO.

ACT V.

SCENE I.

The DOGE'S *Apartment.*

The DOGE *and Attendants.*

Att. My lord, the deputation is in waiting
But add, that if another hour would better
Accord with your will, they will make it theirs.

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Doge. To me all hours are like. Let them approach.
[*Exit Attendant.*
An Officer. Prince! I have done your bidding.
Doge. What command?
Offi. A melancholy one — to call the attendance
Of ——
Doge. True — true — true: I crave your pardon. I
Begin to fail in apprehension, and
Wax very old — old almost as my years.
Till now I fought them off, but they begin
To overtake me.

Enter the Deputation, consisting of six of the Signory, and the Chief of the Ten.

Noble men, your pleasure!
Chief of the Ten. In the first place, the Council doth condole
With the Doge on his late and private grief.
Doge. No more — no more of that.
Chief of the Ten. Will not the Duke
Accept the homage of respect?
Doge. I do
Accept it as 't is given — proceed.
Chief of the Ten. "The Ten,"
With a selected giunta from the senate
Of twenty-five of the best born patricians,
Having deliberated on the state
Of the republic, and the o'erwhelming cares
Which, at this moment, doubly must oppress
Your years, so long devoted to your country,
Have judged it fitting, with all reverence,
Now to solicit from your wisdom (which
Upon reflection must accord in this),
The resignation of the ducal ring,
Which you have worn so long and venerably:
And to prove that they are not ungrateful nor
Cold to your years and services, they add
An appanage of twenty hundred golden
Ducats, to make retirement not less splendid
Than should become a sovereign's retreat.
Doge. Did I hear rightly?
Chief of the Ten. Need I say again?
Doge. No. — Have you done?
Chief of the Ten. I have spoken. Twenty-four
Hours are accorded you to give an answer.

Google

Doge. I shall not need so many seconds.
Chief of the Ten. We
Will now retire.
Doge. Stay! Four and twenty hours
Will alter nothing which I have to say.
Chief of the Ten. Speak!
Doge. When I twice before reiterated
My wish to abdicate, it was refused me:
And not alone refused, but ye exacted
An oath from me that I would never more
Renew this instance. I have sworn to die
In full exertion of the functions, which
My country call'd me here to exercise,
According to my honour and my conscience —
I cannot break *my* oath.
Chief of the Ten. Reduce us not
To the alternative of a decree,
Instead of your compliance.
Doge. Providence
Prolongs my days to prove and chasten me;
But ye have no right to reproach my length
Of days, since every hour has been the country's.
I am ready to lay down my life for her,
As I have laid down dearer things than life:
But for my dignity — I hold it of
The *whole* republic; when the *general* will
Is manifest, then you shall all be answer'd.
Chief of the Ten. We grieve for such an answer; but it cannot
Avail you aught.
Doge. I can submit to all things,
But nothing will advance; no, not a moment.
What you decree — decree.
Chief of the Ten. With this, then, must we
Return to those who sent us?
Doge. You have heard me.
Chief of the Ten. With all due reverence we retire.
[*Exeunt the Deputation, &c.*

Enter an Attendant.

Att. My lord,
The noble dame Marina craves an audience.
Doge. My time is hers.

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Enter MARINA.

Mar. My lord, if I intrude —
Perhaps you fain would be alone?
Doge. Alone,
Alone, come all the world around me, I
Am now and evermore. But we will bear it.
Mar. We will, and for the sake of those who are,
Endeavour —— Oh my husband!
Doge. Give it way;
I cannot comfort thee.
Mar. He might have lived,
So form'd for gentle privacy of life,
So loving, so beloved; the native of
Another land, and who so blest and blessing
As my poor Foscari? Nothing was wanting
Unto his happiness and mine save not
To be Venetian.
Doge. Or a prince's son.
Mar. Yes; all things which conduce to other men's
Imperfect happiness or high ambition,
By some strange destiny, to him proved deadly.
The country and the people whom he loved,
The prince of whom he was the elder born,
And ——
Doge. Soon may be a prince no longer.
Mar. How?
Doge. They have taken my son from me, and now aim
At my too long worn diadem and ring.
Let them resume the gewgaws?
Mar. Oh the tyrants!
In such an hour too!
Doge. 'T is the fittest time;
An hour ago I should have felt it.
Mar. And
Will you not now resent it? — Oh for vengeance!
But he, who, had he been enough protected,
Might have repaid protection in this moment,
Cannot assist his father.
Doge. Nor should do so
Against his country, had he a thousand lives
Instead of that ——
Mar. They tortured from him. This
May be pure patriotism. I am a woman:
To me my husband and my children were

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Country and home. I loved *him* — how I loved him!
I have seen him pass through such an ordeal as
The old martyrs would have shrunk from: he is gone,
And I, who would have given my blood for him,
Have nought to give but tears! But could I compass
The retribution of his wrongs! — Well, well;
I have sons, who shall be men.

Doge. Your grief distracts you.

Mar. I thought I could have borne it, when I saw him
Bow'd down by such oppression; yes, I thought
That I would rather look upon his corse
Than his prolong'd captivity: — I am punish'd
For that thought now. Would I were in his grave!

Doge. I must look on him once more.

Mar. Come with me!

Doge. Is he ———

Mar. Our bridal bed is now his bier.

Doge. And he is in his shroud!

Mar. Come, come, old man!

[*Exeunt the* Doge *and* Marina.

Enter Barbarigo *and* Loredano.

Bar. (*to an Attendant*). Where is the Doge?

Att. This instant retired hence
With the illustrious lady his son's widow.

Lor. Where?

Att. To the chamber where the body lies.

Bar. Let us return, then.

Lor. You forget, you cannot.
We have the implicit order of the Giunta
To await their coming here, and join them in
Their office: they 'll be here soon after us.

Bar. And will they press their answer on the Doge?

Lor. 'T was his own wish that all should be done promptly.
He answer'd quickly, and must so be answer'd;
His dignity is look'd to, his estate
Cared for — what would he more?

Bar. Die in his robes:
He could not have lived long; but I have done
My best to save his honours, and opposed
This proposition to the last, though vainly.
Why would the general vote compel me hither?

Lor. 'T was fit that some one of such different thoughts
From ours should be a witness, lest false tongues
Should whisper that a harsh majority

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Dreaded to have its acts beheld by others.
Bar. And not less, I must needs think, for the sake
Of humbling me for my vain opposition.
You are ingenious, Loredano, in
Your modes of vengeance, nay, poetical,
A very Ovid in the art of *hating*;
'T is thus (although a secondary object,
Yet hate has microscopic eyes), to you
I owe, by way of foil to the more zealous,
This undesired association in
Your Giunta's duties.
Lor. How! — *my* Giunta!
Bar. *Yours!*
They speak your language, watch your nod, approve
Your plans, and do your work. Are they not *yours?*
Lor. You talk unwarily. 'T were best they hear not
This from you.
Bar. Oh! they 'll hear as much one day
From louder tongues than mine; they have gone beyond
Even their exorbitance of power: and when
This happens in the most contemn'd and abject
States, stung humanity will rise to check it.
Lor. You talk but idly.
Bar. That remains for proof.
Here come our colleagues.

Enter the Deputation as before.

Chief of the Ten. Is the Duke aware
We seek his presence?
Att. He shall be inform'd.
[*Exit Attendant.*
Bar. The Duke is with his son.
Chief of the Ten. If it be so,
We will remit him till the rites are over.
Let us return. 'T is time enough to-morrow.
Lor. (*aside to Bar.*) Now the rich man's hell-fire upon your tongue,
Unquench'd, unquenchable! I 'll have it torn
From its vile babbling roots, till you shall utter
Nothing but sobs through blood, for this! Sage signors,
I pray ye be not hasty. [*Aloud to the others.*
Bar. But be human!
Lor. See, the Duke comes!

Enter the Doge.

Doge. I have obey'd your summons.

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Chief of the Ten. We come once more to urge our past request.
Doge. And I to answer.
Chief of the Ten. What?
Doge. My only answer.
You have heard it.
Chief of the Ten. Hear *you* then the last decree,
Definitive and absolute!
Doge. To the point—
To the point! I know of old the forms of office,
And gentle preludes to strong acts — Go on!
Chief of the Ten. You are no longer Doge; you are released.
From your imperial oath as sovereign;
Your ducal robes must be put off; but for
Your services, the state allots the appanage
Already mention'd in our former congress.
Three days are left you to remove from hence,
Under the penalty to see confiscated
All your own private fortune.
Doge. That last clause,
I am proud to say, would not enrich the treasury.
Chief of the Ten. Your answer, Duke!
Lor. Your answer, Francis Foscari!
Doge. If I could have foreseen that my old age
Was prejudicial to the state, the chief
Of the republic never would have shown
Himself so far ungrateful, as to place
His own high dignity before his country;
But this *life* having been so many years
Not useless to that country, I would fain
Have consecrated my last moments to her.
But the decree being render'd, I obey.
Chief of the Ten. If you would have the three days named extended,
We willingly will lengthen them to eight,
As sign of our esteem.
Doge. Not eight hours, signor,
Nor even eight minutes — There 's the ducal ring,
[*Taking off his ring and cap.*
And there the ducal diadem. And so
The Adriatic 's free to wed another.
Chief of the Ten. Yet go not forth so quickly.
Doge. I am old, sir,
And even to move but slowly must begin
To move betimes. Methinks I see amongst you

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A face I know not — Senator! your name,
You, by your garb, Chief of the Forty!
Mem. Signor,
I am the son of Marco Memmo.
Doge. Ah!
Your father was my friend.— But *sons* and *fathers!* —
What, ho! my servants there!
Att. My prince!
Doge. No prince —
There are the princes of the prince! [*Pointing to the Ten's Deputation.*] — Prepare
To part from hence upon the instant.
Chief of the Ten. Why
So rashly? 't will give scandal.
Doge. Answer that;
[*To the Ten.*
It is your province.— Sirs, bestir yourselves:
[*To the Servants.*
There is one burthen which I beg you bear
With care, although 't is past all farther harm —
But I will look to that myself.
Bar. He means
The body of his son.
Doge. And call Marina,
My daughter!

Enter MARINA.

Doge. Get thee ready, we must mourn
Elsewhere.
Mar. And every where.
Doge. True; but in freedom,
Without these jealous spies upon the great.
Signors, you may depart: what would you more?
We are going: do you fear that we shall bear
The palace with us? Its *old* walls, ten times
As *old* as I am, and I'm very old,
Have served you, so have I, and I and they
Could tell a tale; but I invoke them not
To fall upon you! else they would, as erst
The pillars of stone Dagon's temple on
The Israelite and his Philistine foes.
Such power I do believe there might exist
In such a curse as mine, provoked by such
As you; but I curse not. Adieu, good signors!
May the next duke be better than the present.

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Lor. The *present* duke is Paschal Malipiero.
Doge. Not till I pass the threshold of these doors.
Lor. Saint Mark's great bell is soon about to toll
For his inauguration.
Doge. Earth and heaven!
Ye will reverberate this peal; and I
Live to hear this! — the first doge who e'er heard
Such sound for his successor: Happier he,
My attainted predecessor, stern Faliero —
This insult at the least was spared him.
Lor. What!
Do you regret a traitor?
Doge. No — I merely
Envy the dead.
Chief of the Ten. My lord, if you indeed
Are bent upon this rash abandonment
Of the state's palace, at the least retire
By the private staircase, which conducts you towards
The landing-place of the canal.
Doge. No. I
Will not descend the stairs by which I mounted
To sovereignty — the Giants' Stairs, on whose
Broad eminence I was invested duke.
My services have called me up those steps,
The malice of my foes will drive me down them.
There five and thirty years ago was I
Install'd, and traversed these same halls, from which
I never thought to be divorced except
A corse — a corse, it might be, fighting for them —
But not push'd hence by fellow-citizens.
But come; my son and I will go together —
He to his grave, and I to pray for mine.
Chief of the Ten. What! thus in public?
Doge. I was publicly
Elected, and so will I be deposed.
Marina! art thou willing?
Mar. Here 's my arm!
Doge. And here my *staff*: thus propp'd will I go forth.
Chief of the Ten. It must not be — the people will perceive it.
Doge. The people! — There 's no people, you well know it,
Else you dare not deal thus by them or me.
There is a *populace*, perhaps, whose looks
May shame you; but they dare not groan nor curse you,
Save with their hearts and eyes.

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Chief of the Ten. You speak in passion,
Else ——
Doge. You have reason. I have spoken much
More than my wont: it is a foible which
Was not of mine, but more excuses you,
Inasmuch as it shows that I approach
A dotage which may justify this deed
Of yours, although the law does not, nor will.
Farewell, sirs!
Bar. You shall not depart without
An escort fitting past and present rank.
We will accompany, with due respect,
The Doge unto his private palace. Say!
My brethren, will we not?
Different voices. Ay! — Ay!
Doge. You shall not
Stir — in my train, at least. I enter'd here
As sovereign — I go out as citizen
By the same portals, but as citizen
All these vain ceremonies are base insults,
Which only ulcerate the heart the more,
Applying poisons there as antidotes.
Pomp is for princes — I am *none!* — That 's false,
I *am*, but only to these gates.— Ah!
Lor. Hark!
[*The great bell of St. Mark's tolls.*
Bar. The bell!
Chief of the Ten. St. Mark's, which tolls for the election
Of Malipiero.
Doge. Well I recognise,
The sound! I heard it once, but once before,
And that is five and thirty years ago;
Even *then* I *was not young*.
Bar. Sit down, my lord!
You tremble.
Doge. 'T is the knell of my poor boy!
My heart aches bitterly.
Bar. I pray you sit.
Doge. No; my seat here has been a throne till now.
Marina! let us go.
Mar. Most readily.
Doge (*walks a few steps, then stops*). I feel athirst —
will no one bring me here
A cup of water?
Bar. I ——
Mar. And I ——

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Lor. And I ——

[*The* DOGE *takes a goblet from the hand of* LOREDANO.

Doge. I take *yours*, Loredano, from the hand
Most fit for such an hour as this.

Lor. Why so?

Doge. 'T is said that our Venetian crystal has
Such pure antipathy to poisons as
To burst, if aught of venom touches it.
You bore this goblet, and it is not broken.

Lor. Well, sir!

Doge. Then it is false, or you are true.
For my own part, I credit neither; 't is
An idle legend.

Mar. You talk wildly, and
Had better now be seated, nor as yet
Depart. Ah! now you look as look'd my husband!

Bar. He sinks! — support him! — quick — a chair — support him!

Doge. The bell tolls on! — let 's hence — my brain 's on fire!

Bar. I do beseech you, lean upon us!

Doge. No!
A sovereign should die standing. My poor boy!
Off with your arms! — *That bell!*

[*The* DOGE *drops down and dies.*

Mar. My God! My God!

Bar. (*to Lor.*) Behold! your work 's completed!

Chief of the Ten. Is there then
No aid? Call in assistance!

Att. 'T is all over.

Chief of the Ten. If it be so, at least his obsequies
Shall be such as befits his name and nation,
His rank and his devotion to the duties
Of the realm, while his age permitted him
To do himself and them full justice. Brethren,
Say, shall it not be so?

Bar. He has not had
The misery to die a subject where
He reign'd: then let his funeral rites be princely.

Chief of the Ten. We are agreed, then?

All, except Lor. answer, Yes.

Chief of the Ten. Heaven's peace be with him!

Mar. Signors, your pardon: this is mockery.
Juggle no more with that poor remnant, which,
A moment since, while yet it had a soul,

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(A soul by whom you have increased your empire,
And made your power as proud as was his glory,)
You banish'd from his palace, and tore down
From his high place, with such relentless coldness;
And now, when he can neither know these honours,
Nor would accept them if he could, you, signors,
Purpose, with idle and superfluous pomp,
To make a pageant over what you trampled.
A princely funeral will be your reproach,
And not his honour.

Chief of the Ten. Lady, we revoke not
Our purposes so readily.

Mar. I know it,
As far as touches torturing the living.
I thought the dead had been beyond even *you*,
Though (some, no doubt) consign'd to powers which may
Resemble that you exercise on earth.
Leave him to me; you would have done so for
His dregs of life, which you have kindly shorten'd:
It is my last of duties, and may prove
A dreary comfort in my desolation.
Grief is fantastical, and loves the dead,
And the apparel of the grave.

Chief of the Ten. Do you
Pretend still to this office?

Mar. I do, signor.
Though his possessions have been all consumed
In the state's service, I have still my dowry,
Which shall be consecrated to his rites,
And those of—— [*She stops with agitation.*

Chief of the Ten. Best retain it for your children.

Mar. Ay, they are fatherless, I thank you.

Chief of the Ten. We
Cannot comply with your request. His relics
Shall be exposed with wonted pomp, and follow'd
Unto their home by the new Doge, not clad
As *Doge*, but simply as a senator.

Mar. I have heard of murderers, who have interr'd
Their victims; but ne'er heard, until this hour,
Of so much splendour in hypocrisy
O'er those they slew. I 've heard of widows' tears—
Alas! I have shed some—always thanks to you!
I 've heard of *heirs* in sables—you have left none
To the deceased, so you would act the part
Of such. Well, sirs, your will be done! as one day,
I trust, Heaven's will be done too!

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Chief of the Ten. Know you, lady,
To whom ye speak, and perils of such speech?
Mar. I know the former better than yourselves;
The latter — like yourselves; and can face both.
Wish you more funerals?
Bar. Heed not her rash words,
Her circumstances must excuse her bearing
Chief of the Ten. We will not note them down.
Bar. (*turning to Lor. who is writing upon his tablets.*)
What art thou writing,
With such an earnest brow, upon thy tablets?
Lor. (*pointing to the Doge's body*). That *he* has paid me! *
Chief of the Ten. What debt did he owe you?
Lor. A long and just one; Nature's debt and *mine*.

[*Curtain falls.*

* "*L ha pagata.*" An historical fact. See the History of Venice by P. Daru, page 411, vol. 2.

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APPENDIX.

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APPENDIX

TO

THE TWO FOSCARI.

Extrait de l'Histoire de la République de Venise par P. Daru, de l'Académie Française, tom. II

Depuis trente ans, la république n'avait pas déposé les armes. Elle avait acquis les provinces de Brescia, de Bergame, de Crême, et la principauté de Ravenne.

Mais ces guerres continuelles faisaient beaucoup de malheureux et de mécontents. Le doge François Foscari, à qui on ne pouvait pardonner d'en avoir été le promoteur, manifesta une seconde fois, en 1442, et probablement avec plus de sincérité que la première, l'intention d'abdiquer sa dignité. Le conseil s'y refusa encore. On avait exigé de lui le serment de ne plus quitter le dogat. Il était déjà avancé dans la vieillesse, conservant cependant beaucoup de force de tête et de caractère, et jouissant de la gloire d'avoir vu la république étendre au loin les limites de ses domaines pendant son administration.

Au milieu de ces prospérités, de grands chagrins vinrent mettre à l'épreuve la fermeté de son âme.

Son fils, Jacques Foscari, fut accusé, en 1445, d'avoir reçu des présents de quelques princes ou seigneurs étrangers, notamment, disait-on, du duc de Milan, Philippe Visconti. C'était non seulement une bassesse, mais une infraction des lois positives de la république.

Le conseil des dix traita cette affaire comme s'il se fut agi d'un délit commis par un particulier obscur. L'accusé fut amené devant ses juges, devant le doge, qui ne crut pas pouvoir s'abstenir de présider le tribunal. Là, il fut interrogé, appliqué à la question,* déclaré coupable, et il entendit, de la bouche de son père, l'arrêt qui le condamnait à un bannissement perpétuel, et le reléguait à Naples de Romanie, pour y finir ses jours.

Embarqué sur une galère pour se rendre au lieu de son exil, il tomba malade à Trieste. Les sollicitations du doge obtinrent, non sans difficulté, qu'on lui assignât une autre résidence. Enfin, le conseil des dix lui permit de se retirer à Trévise, en lui imposant l'obligation d'y rester sous peine de mort, et de se présenter tous les jours dévant le gouverneur.

Il y était depuis cinq ans, lorsqu'un des chefs du conseil des dix assassiné. Les soupçons se portèrent sur lui: un de ses domestiques qu'on avait vu à Venise fut arrêté et subit la torture. Les bourreaux ne purent lui arracher aucun aveu. Ce terrible tribunal se fit amener le maître, le soumit aux mêmes épreuves; il résista à tous les tourments, ne cessant d'attester son innocence;† mais on ne vit dans cette

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* E datagli la cordo per avere da lui la verità; chiamato il consiglio de dieci colla giunta, nel quale, fù messer lo doge, fù sentenziato. (Marin Sanuto, Vite de' Duchi. F. Foscari.)

† E fù tormentato nè mai confesso cosa alcuna, pure parve al consiglio de' dieci di confinarlo in vita alla Canea. (Ibid.) Voici le texte du jugement: "Cum Jacobus Foscari per occasionem percussionis et mortis Hermolai Donati fuit retentus et examinatus, et propter significationes, testificationes, et scripturas quas

constance que de l'obstination ; de ce qu'il taisait le fait, on conclut que ce fait existait ; on attribua sa fermeté à la magie, et on le relégua à la Canée. De cette terre lointaine, le banni, digne alors de quelque pitié, ne cessait d'écrire à son père, à ses amis, pour obtenir quelque adoucissement à sa déportation. N'obtenant rien, et sachant que la terreur qu'inspirait le conseil des dix ne lui permettait pas d'espérer de trouver dans Venise une seule voix qui s'élevât en sa faveur ; il fit une lettre pour le nouveau duc de Milan, par laquelle, au nom des bons offices que Sforce avait reçus du chef de la république, il implorait son intervention en faveur d'un innocent, du fils du doge.

Cette lettre, selon quelques historiens, fut confiée à un marchand, qui avait promis de la faire parvenir au duc ; mais qui, trop averti de ce qu'il avait à craindre en se rendant l'intermédiare d'une pareille correspondance, se hâta, en débarquant à Venise, de la remettre au chef du tribunal Une autre version, qui paraît plus sûre, rapporte que la lettre fut surprise par un espion, attaché au pas de l'exilé.*

Ce fut un nouveau délit dont on eut à punir Jacques Foscari. Réclamer la protection d'un prince étranger était un crime, dans un sujet de la république. Une galère partit sur-le-champ pour l'amener dans les prisons de Venise. A son arrivée il fut soumis à l'estrapade.† C'était une singulière destinée, pour le citoyen d'une république et pour le fils d'un prince, d'être trois fois dans sa vie appliqué à la question. Cette fois la torture était d'autant plus odieuse, qu'elle n'avait point d'objet, le fait qu'on avait à lui reprocher, étant incontestable.

Quand on demanda à l'accusé, dans les intervalles que les bourreaux lui accordaient, pourquoi il avait écrit la lettre qu'on lui produisait, il répondit que c'était précisément parce qu'il ne doutait pas qu'elle ne tombât entre les mains du tribunal, que toute autre voie lui avait été fermée pour faire parvenir ses réclamations, qu'il s'attendait bien qu'on le ferait amener à Venise ; mais qu'il avait tout risqué pour avoir la consolation de voir sa femme, son père, et sa mère, encore une fois.

Sur cette naïve déclaration, on confirma sa sentence d'exil ; mais on l'aggrava, en y ajoutant qu'il serait retenu en prison pendant un an. Cette rigueur, dont on usait envers un malheureux, était sans doute odieuse ; mais cette politique, qui défendait à tous les citoyens de faire intervenir les étrangers dans les affaires intérieures de la république, était sage. Elle était chez eux une maxime de gouvernement et une maxime inflexible. L'historien Paul Morosini‡ a conté que l'empereur Frédéric III. pendant qu'il était l'hôte des Vénitiens, demanda, comme une faveur particulière, l'admission d'un citoyen dans le grand conseil, et la grace d'un ancien gouverneur de Candie, gendre du doge, et banni pour sa mauvaise administration, sans pouvoir obtenir ni l'une ni l'autre.

Cependant, on ne put refuser au condamné la permission de voir sa femme, ses enfants, ses parents, qu'il allait quitter pour toujours. Cette dernière entrevue même fut accompagnée de cruauté, par la sévère circonspection, qui retenait les épanchements de la douleur paternelle et conjugale. Ce ne fut point dans l'intérieur de leur appartement, ce fut dans une des grandes salles du palais, qu'une femme, accompagnée de ces quatre fils, vint faire les derniers adieux à son mari, qu'un père octogénaire et le dogaresse accablée d'infirmités, jouirent un moment de la triste consolation de mêler leurs larmes à celles de leur exilé. Il se jeta à leurs genoux en leur tendant des mains disloquées par la torture, pour les supplier de solliciter quelque adoucissement à la sentence qui venait d'être prononcée contre lui. Son père eut le courage de lui répondre : " Non, mon fils, respectez votre arrêt, et obéissez sans

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habentur contra eum, clare apparet ipsum esse reum criminis prædicti, sed propter incantationes et verba quæ sibi reperta sunt, de quibus existit indictia manifesta, videtur propter obstinatam mentem suam, non esse possible extrahere ab ipso illam veritatem, quæ clara est per scripturas et per testificationes, quoniam in fine aliquam nec vocem, nec gemitum. sed solum intra dentes voces ipse videtur et auditur infra se loqui, etc . . . . Tamen non est standum in istis terminis, propter honorem statûs nostri et pro multis respectibus, præsertim quod regimen nostrum occupatur in hac re, et qui interdictum est amplius progredere : vadit pars, quod dictus Jacobus Foscari, propter ea quæ habentur de illo, mittatur in confinium in citivate Caneæ," etc.—Notice sur le procès de Jacques Foscari, dans un volume, intitulé Raccolta di memorie storiche e annedote, per formar la Storia dell' eccellentissimo consiglio di X della sua prima instituzione sino a' giorni nostri, con la diverse variazioni e riforme nelle varie epoche successe. (Archives de Venise.)

* La notice citée ci-dessus, qui rapporte les actes de cette procéduro.

† Ebbe prima per sapere la verità trenta squassi dì corda. (Marin Sanuto, Vite de' Duchi. F. Foscari.)

‡ Historia di Venezia lib. 23.

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murmure à la seigneurie."* A ces mots il se sépara de l'infortuné, qui fut sur-le-champ embarqué pour Candie.

L'antiquité vit avec autant d'horreur que d'admiration un père condamnant ses fils évidemment coupables. Elle hésita pour qualifier de vertu sublime ou de férocité cet effort qui paraît au-dessus de la nature humaine ;† mais ici, où la première faute n'était qu'une faiblesse, où la seconde n'était pas prouvée, où la troisième n'avait rien de criminel, comment concevoir la constance d'un père, qui voit torturer trois fois son fils unique, qui l'entend condamner sans preuves, et qui n'éclate pas en plaintes ; qui ne l'aborde que pour lui montrer un visage plus austère qu'attendri, et qui, au moment de s'en séparer pour jamais, lui interdit les murmures et jusqu'à l'espérance? Comment expliquer une si cruelle circonspection, si ce n'est en avouant, à notre honte, que la tyrannie peut obtenir de l'espèce humaine les mêmes efforts que la vertu? La servitude aurait-elle son héroïsme comme la liberté?

Quelque temps après ce jugement, on découvrit le véritable auteur de l'assassinat, dont Jacques Foscari portait le peine; mais il n'était plus temps de réparer cette atroce injustice, le malheureux était mort dans sa prison.

Il me reste à raconter la suite des malheurs du père. L'histoire les attribue à l'impatience qu'avaient ses ennemis et ses rivaux de voir vaquer sa place. Elle accuse formellement Jacques Loredan, l'un des chefs du conseil des dix, de s'être livré contre ce vieillard aux conseils d'une haine héréditare, et qui depuis long temps divisait leurs maisons.‡

François Foscari avait essayé de la faire cesser, en offrant sa fille à l'illustre amiral Pierre Loredan, pour un de ses fils. L'alliance avait été rejetée, et l'inimitié des deux familles s'en était accrue. Dans tous les conseils, dans toutes les affaires, le doge trouvait toujours les Loredans prêts à combattre ses propositions ou ses intérêts. Il lui échappa un jour de dire qu'il ne se croirait réellement prince, que lorsque Pierre Loredan aurait cessé de vivre. Cet amiral mourut quelque temps après, d'une incommodité assez prompte qu'on ne put expliquer. Il n'en fallut pas davantage aux malveillants pour insinuer que François Foscari, ayant desiré cette mort, pouvait bien l'avoir hâtée.

Ces bruits s'accréditèrent encore lorsqu'on vit aussi périr subitement Marc Loredan, frère de Pierre, et cela dans le moment où, en sa qualité d'avogador, il instruisait un procès contre André Donato, gendre du doge, accusé de péculat. On écrivit sur la tombe de l'amiral qu'il avait été enlevé à la patrie par le poison.

Il n'y avait aucune preuve, aucun indice contre François Foscari, aucune raison même de le soupçonner. Quand sa vie entière n'aurait pas démenti une imputation aussi odieuse, il savait que son rang ne lui promettait ni l'impunité ni même l'indulgence. La mort tragique de l'un de ses prédecesseurs l'en avertissait, et il n'avait que trop d'exemples domestiques du soin que le conseil des dix prenait d'humilier le chef de la république.

Cependant, Jacques Loredan, fils de Pierre, croyait ou feignait de croire avoir à venger les pertes de sa famille.§ Dans ses livres de comptes (car il faisait le commerce, comme à cette époque presque tous les patriciens,) il avit inscrit de sa pro-

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* Marin Sanuto, dans sa chronique, Vite de' Duchi, se sert ici sans en avoir eu l'intention d'une expression assez énergique : "Il doge era vecchio in decrepita età e caminava con una mazzetta : E quando gli andò parlogli molto constantemente che parea che non fosse suo figliuolo, licet fosse figliuolo unico, e Jacopo disse, messer padre, vi prego che procuriate per me, acciocchè io torni a casa mia. Il doge disse : Jacopo, va e obbedisci a quello che vuole la terra, e non cercar più oltre."

† Cela fut un acte que l'on ne scauroit ny suffisamment louer, ny assez blasmer : car, ou c'estoit une excellence de vertu, qui rendoit ainsi son cœur impassible, ou une violence de passion qui le rendoit insensible, dont ne l'une ne l'autre n'est chose petite, ainsi surpassant l'ordinaire d'humaine nature et tenant ou de la divinité ou de la bestialité. Mais il est plus raisonnable que le jugement des hommes s'accorde à sa gloire, que la foiblesse des jugeans fasse des croire sa vertu. Mais pour lors quand il se fut retiré, tout le monde demeura sur la place, comme transy d'horreur et de frayeur, par un long temps sans mot dire, pour avoir veu ce qui avait été fait. (Plutarque, Valerius Publicola.)

‡ Je suis principalement dans ce récit une relation manuscrite de la déposition de François Foscari, qui est dans le volume intitule Raccolta di memorie storiche e annedote, per formar la Storia dell' eccellentissimo consiglio di X. (Archives de Venise.)

§ Hasce tamen injurias quamvis imaginarias non tam ad animum revocaverat

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pre main le doge au nombre de ses débiteurs, pour la mort, y était-il dit, de mon père et de mon oncle.* De l'autre côté du registre, il avait laissé une page en blanc, pour y faire mention du recouvrement de cette dette, et en effet, après la perte du doge, il écrivit sur son régistre, il me l'a payée — l'ha pagata.

Jacques Loredan fut élu membre du conseil des dix, en devint un des trois chefs, et se promit bien de profiter de cette occasion pour accomplir la vengeance qu'il méditait.

Le doge en sortant de la terrible épreuve qu'il venait de subir, pendant le procès de son fils, s'était retiré au fond de son palais, incapable de se livrer aux affaires, consumé de chagrins, accablé de vieillesse, il ne se montrait plus en public, ni même dans les conseils. Cette retraite, si facile à expliquer dans un vieillard octogénaire si malheureux, déplut aux decemvirs, qui voulurent y voir un murmure contre leur arrêts.

Loredan commença par se plaindre devant ses collègues du tort que les infirmités du doge, son absence des conseils, apportaient à l'expédition des affaires, il finit par hasarder et réussit à faire agréer la proposition de le déposer. Ce n'était pas la première fois que Venise avait pour prince un homme dans la caducité ; l'usage et les lois y avaient pourvu ; dans ces circonstances le doge était supplée par le plus ancien du conseil. Ici, cela ne suffisait pas aux ennemis de Foscari. Pour donner plus de solennité à la délibération, le conseil des dix demanda une adjonction de vingt-cinq sénateurs ; mais comme on n'en énonçait pas l'objet, et que le grand conseil était loin de le soupçonner, il se trouva que Marc Foscari, frère du doge, leur fut donné pour l'un des adjoints. Au lieu de l'admettre é la délibération, ou de réclamer contre ce choix, on enferma ce sénateur dans une chambre séparée, et on lui fit jurer de ne jamais parler de cette exclusion qu'il éprouvait, en lui déclarant qu'il y allait de sa vie ; ce qui n'empêcha pas qu'on n'inscrivît son nom au bas du décret comme s'il y eût pris part.†

Quand on en vint y la délibération, Loredan la provoqua en ces termes :‡ " Si l'utilité publique doit imposer silence à tous les intérêts privés, je ne doute pas que nous ne prenions aujourd'hui une mésure que la patrie réclame que nous lui devons. Les états ne peuvent se maintenir dans un ordre de choses immuable ; vous n'avez qu'à voir comme le nôtre est changé, et combien il le serait davantage s'il n'y avait une autorité assez ferme pour y porter remède. J'ai honte de vous faire remarquer la confusion qui règne dans les conseils, le désordre des délibérations, l'encombrement des affaires, et la légéreté avec laquelle les plus importantes sont décidées ; la licence de notre jeunesse, le peu d'assiduité des magistrats, l'introduction de nouveautés dangereuses. Quel est l'effet de ces désordres ? de compromettre notre considération. Quelle en est la cause ? l'absence d'un chef capable de modérer les uns, de diriger les autres, de donner l'exemple à tous, et de maintenir la force des lois.

" Où est le temps où nos décrets étaient aussitôt exécutés que rendus ? Où François Carrare se trouvait investi dans Padoue, avant de pouvoir être seulement informé que nous voulions lui faire la guerre ? nous avons vu tout le contraire dans la dernière guerre contre le duc de Milan. Malheureuse la republique qui est sans chef !

" Je ne vous rappelle pas tous ces inconvénients et leurs suites déplorables, pour vous affliger, pour vous effrayer, mais pour vous faire souvenir que vous êtes les maîtres, les conservateurs de cet état, fondé par vos pères, et de la liberté que nous devons à leurs travaux, à leurs institutions. Ici, le mal indique le remède. Nous n'avons point de chef, il nous en faut un. Notre prince est notre ouvrage, nous avons donc le droit de juger son mérite quand il s'agit de l'élire, et son incapacité quand elle se manifeste. J'ajouterai que le peuple, encore bien qu'il n'ait pas le droit de prononcer sur les actions de ses maîtres, apprendra ce changement avec transport. C'est la providence, je n'en doute pas, qui lui inspire elle-même ces dispositions, pour vous avertir que la république réclame cette résolution, et que le sort de l'état est en vos mains."

Ce discours n'éprouva que de timides contradictions ; cependant, la délibération

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Jacobus Lauredanus defunctorum nepos, quam in abecedarium vindictam opportuna. (Palazzi Fasti Ducales.)

* Ibid, et l'Histoire Venitienne de Vianolo.

† Il faut cependant remarquer que dans la notice où l'on raconte ce fait, la délibération est rapportée, que les vingt-cinq adjoints sont nommés, et que le nom de Marc Foscari ne s'y trouve pas.

‡ Cette harangue se lit dans la notice citée ci-dessus.

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dura huit jours. L'assemblée, ne se jugeant pas aussi sûre de l'approbation universelle que l'orateur voulait le lui faire croire, desirait que le doge donnât lui-même sa démission. Il avait déjà proposée deux fois, et on n'avait pas voulu l'accepter.

Aucune loi ne portait que le prince fut révocable; il était au contraire à vie et les exemples qu'on pouvait citer de plusieurs doges déposés, prouvaient que de telles révolutions avaient toujours été le résultat d'un mouvement populaire.

Mais d'ailleurs, si le doge pouvait être déposé, ce n'était pas assurement par un tribunal composé d'un petit nombre de membres, institué pour punir les crimes, et nullement investi du droit de révoquer ce que le corps souverain de l'état avait fait.

Cependant, le tribunal arrêta que les six conseillers de la seigneurie, et les chefs du conseil des dix, se transporteraient auprès du doge pour lui signifier, que l'excellentissime conseil avait jugé convenable qu'il abdiquât une dignité dont son âge ne lui permettait plus de remplir les fonctions. On lui donnait 1500 ducats d'or pour son entretien et vingt-quatre heures pour se décider.*

Foscari répondit sur-le-champ avec beaucoup de gravité, que deux fois il avait voulu se démettre de sa charge ; qu'au lieu de le lui permettre, on avait exigé de lui le serment de ne plus réitérer cette demande ; que la providence avait prolongé ses jours pour l'éprouver et pour l'affliger, que cependant on n'était pas en droit de reprocher sa longue vie à un homme qui avait employé quatre-vingt-quatre ans au service de la république ; qu'il était prêt encore à lui sacrifier sa vie ; mais que, pour sa dignité, il la tenait de la république entière, et qu'il se réservait de répondre sur ce sujet, quand la volonté générale se serait légalement manifestée.

Le lendemain, à l'heure indiquée, les conseillers et les chefs des dix se présentèrent. Il ne voulut pas leur donner d'autre réponse. Le conseil s'assembla sur-le-champ, lui envoya demander encore une fois sa résolution séance tenante, et, la réponse ayant été la même, on prononça que le doge était relevé de son serment et déposé de sa dignité, on lui assignait une pension de 1500 ducats d'or, en lui enjoignant de sortir du palais dans huit jours, sous peine de voir tous ses biens confisqués.†

Le lendemain, ce décret fut porté au doge, et ce fut Jacques Loredan qui eut la cruelle joie de le lui présenter. Il répondit : " Si j'avais pu prévoir que ma vieillesse fut préjudiciable à l'état, le chef de la république ne se serait pas montré assez ingrat, pour préférer sa dignité à la patrie ; mais cette vie lui ayant été utile pendant tant d'années, je voulais lui en consacrer jusqu'au dernier moment. Le décret est rendu, je m'y conformerai." Après avoir parlé ainsi, il se dépouilla des marques de sa dignité, remit l'anneau ducal, qui fut brisé en sa présence, et dès le jour suivant il quitta ce palais, qu'il avait habité pendant trente-cinq ans, accompagné de son frère, de ses parents, et de ses amis. Un secrétaire, qui se trouva sur le perron, l'invita à descendre par un escalier dérobé, afin d'éviter la foule du peuple, qui s'était rassemblé dans les cours, mais il s'y refusa, disant qu'il voulait descendre par où il était monté ; et quand il fut au bas de l'escalier des géants, il se retourna, appuyé sur la béquille, vers le palais en proférant ces paroles : " Mes services m'y avaient appelé, la malice de mes ennemis m'en fait sortir."

La foule qui s'ouvrait sur son passage, et qui avait peut-être desiré sa mort, était émue de respect et d'attendrissement.‡ Rentré dans sa maison, il recommanda à sa famille d'oublier les injures de ses ennemis. Personne dans les divers corps de l'état ne se crut en droit de s'étonner, qu'un prince inamovible eût été déposé sans qu'on lui reprochât rien : que l'état eût perdu son chef, à l'insu du sénat et du corps souverain lui-même. Le peuple seul laissa échapper quelques regrets : une proclamation du conseil des dix prescrivit le silence le plus absolu sur cette affaire, sous peine de mort.

Avant de donner un successeur à François Foscari, une nouvelle loi fut rendue, qui défendait au doge d'ouvrir et de lire, autrement qu'en présence de ses conseillers, les dépêches des ambassadeurs de la république, et les lettres des princes étrangers.§

Les électeurs entrèrent au conclave et nommèrent au dogat Paschal Malipier le 30 Octobre, 1457. La cloche de Saint-Marc, qui annonçait à Vénise son nouveau

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* Ce Décret est rapporté textuellement dans la notice.

† La notice rapporte aussi ce décret.

‡ On lit dans la notice ces propres mots : " Se fosse stato in loro potere volontieri lo avrebbero restituito."

§ Hist. di Venetia, di Paolo Morosini, lib. 24.

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prince, vint frapper l'oreille de François Foscari ; cette fois sa fermeté l'abandonna, il éprouva un tel saisissement, qu'il mourut le lendemain.*

La république arrêta qu'on lui rendrait les mêmes honneurs funèbres que s'il fut mort dans l'exercice de sa dignité ; mais lorsqu'on se présenta pour enlever ses restes, sa veuve, qui de son nom était Marine Nani, déclara qu'elle ne le souffrirait point ; qu'on ne devait pas traiter en prince après sa mort celui qui vivant on avait dépouillé de la couronne, et que, puisqu'il avait consumé ses biens au service de l'état, elle saurait, consacrer sa dot à lui faire rendre les derniers honneurs.† On ne tint aucun compte de cette résistance, et malgré les protestations de l'ancienne dogaresse, le corps fut enlevé, revêtu des ornemens ducaux, exposé en public, et les obsèques furent célébrées avec la pompe accoutumée. Le nouveau doge assista au convoi en robe de sénateur.

La pitié qu'avait inspirée le malheur de ce vieillard, ne fut pas tout-à-fait stérile. Un an après, on osa dire que le conseil des dix avait outrepassé ses pouvoirs, et il lui fut défendu par une loi du grand conseil de s'ingérer à l'avenir de juger le prince, à moins que ce ne fut pour cause de félonie.‡

Un acte d'autorité tel que la déposition d'un doge inamovible de sa nature, aurait pu exciter un soulèvement général, ou au moins occasionner une division dans une république autrement constituée que Venise. Mais depuis trois ans, il existait dans celle-ci une magistrature, ou plutôt une autorité, devant laquelle tout devait se taire.

Extrait de l'Histoire des Républiques Italiennes du Moyen Age. Par J. C. L. Simonde de Sismondi, tom. x.

Le Doge de Venise, qui avait prévenu par ce traité une guerre non moins dangereuse que celle qu'il avait terminée presque en même temps par le traité de Lodi, était alors parvenu à une extreme vieillesse. François Foscari occupait cette première dignité de l'état dès le 15 Avril, 1423. Quoiqu'il fut déjà âgé de plus de cinquante-un ans à l'époque de son élection, il était cependant le plus jeune des quarante-un électeurs. Il avait eu beaucoup de peine à parvenir au rang qu'il convoitait, et son élection avait été conduite avec beaucoup d'addresse. Pendant plusieurs jours de scrutin ses amis les plus zélés s'étaient abstenus de lui donner leur suffrage, pour que les autres ne le considérâssent pas comme un concurrent redoutable.§ Le conseil des dix craignait son crédit parmi la noblesse pauvre, parce qu'il avait cherché, à se la rendre favorable, tandis qu'il était procurateur de Saint-Marc, en faisant employer plus de trente mille ducats à doter des jeunes filles de bonne maison, ou à établir de jeunes gentilshommes. On craignoit encore sa nombreuse famille, car alors il était père de quatre enfans, et marié de nouveau ; enfin on redoutait son ambition et son goût pour la guerre. L'opinion que ses adversaires s'étaient formée de lui fut vérifiée par les événemens ; pendant trente-quatre ans que Foscari fut à la tête de la république, elle ne cessa point de combattre. Si les hostilités étaient suspendues durant quelques mois, c'était pour recommencer bientôt avec plus de vigueur. Ce fut l'époque où Venise étendit son empire sur Brescia, Bergame, Ravenne, et Crême ; où elle fonda sa domination de Lombardie, et parut sans cesse sur le point d'asservir toute cette province. Profond, courageux, inébranlable, Foscari communiqua aux conseils son propre caractère, et ses talens lui firent obtenir plus d'influence sur la république que n'avaient exercé la plupart de ses prédécesseurs. Mais si son ambition avait eu pour but l'agrandissement de sa famille, elle fut cruellement trompée ; trois de ses fils moururent dans les huit années qui suivirent son élection ; le quatrième, Jacob, par lequel la maison Foscari s'est perpétuée, fut victime de la jalousie du conseil des dix, et empoisonna par ses malheurs les jours de son pere.‖

En effet, le conseil des dix, redoublant de défiance envers le chef de l'état, lorsqu'il

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* Hist. di Pietro Justiniani, lib. 8.
† Hist. d'Egnatio, liv. 6. cap. 7.
‡ Ce décret est du 25 Octobre, 1458. La notice le rapporte.
§ Marin Sanuto, Vite de' Duchi di Venezia, p. 967.
‖ Ibid. p. 968.

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le voyoit plus fort par ses talens et sa popularité, veilloit sans cesse sur Foscari, pour le punir de son crédit, et de sa gloire. Au mois de Février, 1445, Michel Bevilacqua, Florentin, exilé à Venise, accusat en secret Jacques Foscari auprès des inquisiteurs d'état, d'avoir reçu de duc Philippe Visconti, des présens d'argent et de joyaux, par les mains des gens de sa maison. Telle était l'odieuse procédure adoptée à Venise, que sur cette accusation secrète le fils du doge, du représentant de la majesté de la république, fut mis à la torture. On lui arracha par l'estrapade l'aveu des charges portées contre lui; il fut relégué pour le reste de ses jours à Napoli de Romanie, avec obligation de se présenter chaque matin au commandant de la place.* Cependant, le vaisseau qui le portait ayant touché à Trieste, Jacob, grièvement malade des suites de la torture, et plus encore de l'humiliation qu'il avait éprouvée, demanda en grâce au conseil des dix de n'être pas envoyé plus loin. Il obtint cette faveur, par une délibération du 28 Décembre, 1446; il fut rappelé à Trévise; et il eut la liberté d'habiter tout le Trévisan indifféremment.†

Il vivait en paix à Trévise; et la fille de Léonard Contarini, qu'il avait épousée le 10 Février, 1441, était venue le joindre dans son exil, lorsque le 5 Novembre, 1450, Almoro Donato, chef du conseil des dix, fut assassiné. Les deux autres inquisiteurs d'état, Triadano Gritti et Antonio Venieri, portèrent leur soupçons sur Jacob Foscari, parce-qu'un domestique à lui, nommé Olivier, avait été vu ce soir-là même à Venise, et avait des premiers donné la nouvelle de cet assassinat. Olivier fut mis à la torture, mais il nia jusqu'à la fin, avec un courage, inébranlable, le crime dont on l'accusait, quoique ses juges eussent la barbarie de lui faire donner jusqu'à quatre-vingts tours d'estrapade. Cependant, comme Jacob Foscari avait de puissans motifs d'inimitié contre le conseil des dix, qui l'avait condamné, et qui temoignait de la haîne au doge son père, on essaya de mettre à son tour Jacob à la torture, et l'on prolongea contre lui ces affreux tourmens, sans réussir à en tirer aucune confession. Malgré sa dénégation, le conseil des dix le condamna à être transporté à la Canée, et accorda une récompense à son délateur. Mais les horribles douleurs que Jacob Foscari avait éprouvées avaient troublé sa raison, ses persécuteurs, touchés de ce dernier malheur, permirent, qu'on le ramenât à Venise le 26 Mai, 1451. Il embrassa son père, il puisa dans ses exhortations quelque courage et quelque calme, et il fut reconduit immédiatement à la Canée.‡ Sur ces entrefaites, Nicolas Erizzo, homme déjà noté pour un precédent crime, confessa, en mourant, que c'était lui qui avait tué Almoro Donato.§

Le malheureux doge, François Foscari, avait déjà cherché à plusieurs réprises, à abdiquer une dignité si funeste à lui-même et à sa famille. Il lui semblait que, redescendu au rang de simple citoyen, comme il n'inspirerait plus de crainte ou de jalousie, on n'accablerait plus son fils par ces effroyables persécutions. Abattu par la mort de ses premiers enfans, il avait voulu, dès le 26 Juin, 1433, déposer une dignité, durant l'exercice de laquelle sa patrie avait été tourmentée par la guerre, par la peste, et par des malheurs de tout genre.‖ Il renouvela cette proposition après les jugemens rendus contre son fils; mais le conseil des dix le retenait forcément sur le trône, comme il retenait son fils dans les fers.

En vain Jacob Foscari, obligé de se présenter chaque jour au gouverneur de la Canée, réclamait contre l'injustice de sa dernière sentence, sur laquelle la confession d'Erizzo ne lassait plus de doutes. En vain il demandait grâce au farouche conseil des dix; il ne pouvait obtenir aucune réponse. Le désir de revoir son père et sa mère, arrivés tous deux au dernier terme de la vieillesse, le désir de revoir une patrie dont la cruauté ne méritait pas un si tendre amour, se changèrent en lui en une vraie fureur. Ne pouvant retourner à Venise pour y vivre libre, il voulut du moins y aller chercher un supplice. Il écrivit au duc de Milan à la fin de Mai, 1456, pour implorer sa protection auprès du sénat: et sachant qu'une telle lettre séroit considérée comme un crime, il l'exposa lui-même dans un lieu où il était sûr qu'elle seroit saisie par les espions qui l'entouraient. En effet, la lettre étant déférée au conseil des dix, on l'envoya chercher aussitôt, et il fut reconduit à Venise le 19 Juillet, 1456.¶

Jacob Foscari ne ma point sa lettre, il raconta en même temps dans quel but il l'avait écrite, et comment il l'avait fait tomber entre les mains de son délateur. Malgré ces aveux, Foscari fut remis à la torture, et on lui donna trente tours d'estrapade, pour voir s'il confirmerait ensuite ses dépositions. Quand on le détacha de la corde,

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* Marin Sanuto, Vite de' Duchi di Venezia, p. 396.
† Ibid. p. 1123.
‡ Ibid. p. 1133.—M. Ant. Sabellico, Deca III. L. VI. f. 187.
§ Marin Sanuto, p. 1139. ‖ Ibid. p. 1032. ¶ Ibid. p. 1162.

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on le trouva déchiré par ces horribles secousses. Les juges permirent alors à son père, à sa mère, à sa femme, et à ses fils, d'aller le voir dans sa prison. Le vieux Foscari, appuyé sur un baton, ne se traîna qu'avec peine, dans la chambre où son fils unique était pansé de ses blessures. Ce fils demandait encore la grâce de mourir dans sa maison.— " Retourne à ton exil, mon fils, puisque ta patrie l'ordonne," lui dit le doge, " et soumets-toi à sa volonté." Mais en rentrant dans son palais, ce malheureux vieillard s'évanouit, épuisé par la violence qu'il s'était faite. Jacob devait encore passer une année en prison à la Canée, avant qu'on lui rendît la même liberté limitée à laquelle il était réduit avant cet événement; mais à peine fut il débarqué sur cette terre d'exil, qu'il y mourut de douleur.*

Dès-lors, et pendant quinze mois, le vieux doge, accablé d'années et chagrins, ne recouvra plus la force de son corps ou celle de son âme; il n'assistait plus à aucun des conseils, et il ne pouvait plus remplir aucune des fonctions de sa dignité. Il était entré dans sa quatre-vingt-sixième année, et si le conseil des dix avait été susceptible de quelque pitié, il aurait attendu en silence la fin, sans doute prochaine, d'une carrière marquée par tant de gloire et tant de malheurs. Mais le chef du conseil des dix était alors Jacques Loredano, fils de Marc, et neveu de Pierre, le grand amiral, qui toute leur vie été les ennemis acharnés du vieux doge. Ils avaient transmis leur haîne à leurs enfans, et cette vieille rancune n'était pas encore satisfaite.† A l'instigation de Loredano, Jérome Barbarigo, inquisiteur d'état, proposa au conseil des dix, au mois d'Octobre, 1457, de soumettre Foscari à une nouvelle humiliation. Dès que ce magistrat ne pouvait plus remplir ses fonctions, Barbarigo demanda qu'on nommât un autre doge. Le conseil, qui avait refusé par deux fois l'abdication de Foscari, parce que la constitution ne pouvait la permettre, hésita avant de se mettre en contradiction avec ses propres décrets. Les discussions dans le conseil et la junte se prolongèrent pendant huit jours, jusque fort avant dans le nuit. Cependant, on fit entrer dans l'assemblée Marco Foscari, procurateur de Saint-Marc, et frère du doge, pour qu'il fut lié par le redoutable serment du secret, et qu'il ne pût arrêter les menées de ses ennemis. Enfin, le conseil se rendit auprès du doge, et lui demanda d'abdiquer volontairement un emploi qu'il ne pouvait plus exercer. " J'ai juré," répondit le vieillard, " de remplir jusqu'à ma mort, selon mon honneur et ma conscience, les fonctions auxquelles ma patrie m'a appelé. Je ne puis me délir moi-même de mon serment; qu'un ordre des conseils dispose de moi, je m'y soumettrai, mais je ne le devancerai pas." Alors une nouvelle délibération du conseil délia François Foscari de son serment ducal, lui assura une pension de deux mille ducats pour le reste de sa vie, et lui ordonna d'évacuer en trois jours le palais, et de déposer les ornemens de sa dignité. Le doge ayant remarqué parmi les conseillers qui lui portèrent cet ordre, un chef de la quarante qu'il ne connoissait pas, demanda son nom: " Je suis le fils de Marco Memmo," lui dit le conseiller.—" Ah! ton père était mon ami," lui dit le vieux doge, en soupirant. Il donna aussitôt des ordres pour qu'on transportât ses effets dans une maison à lui; et le lendemain 23 Octobre on le vit, se soutenat à peine, et appuyé sur son vieux frère, redescendre ces mêmes escaliers sur lesquels, trente-quatre ans auparavant, on l'avait vu installé avec tant de pompe, et traverser ces mêmes salles où la republique avait reçu ses sermens. Le peuple entier parut indigné de tant de dureté exercée contre un vieillard qu'il respectait et qu'il aimait; mais le conseil des dix fit publier une défense de parler de cette révolution, sous peine d'être traduit devant les inquisiteurs d'état. Le 20 Octobre, Pasqual Malipieri, procurateur de Saint-Marc, fut élu pour successeur de Foscari; celui-ci n'eut pas néanmoins l'humiliation de vivre sujet, là où il avait régné. En entendant le son des cloches, qui sonnaient en actions de grâces pour cette élection, il mourut subitement d'une hémorrhagie causée par une veine qui s'éclata dans sa poitrine.‡

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* Marin Sanuto, Vite de' Duchi di Venezia, p. 1163.— Navagiero, Stor. Venez. p. 1118.

† Vettor Sandi Storia civile Veneziana, P. II. L. VIII. p. 715—717.

‡ Marin Sanuto, Vite de' Duchi di Venezia, p. 1164. — Chronicon Eugubinum, T. XXI. p. 992. — Christoforo da Soldo Istoria Bresciana, T. XXI. p. 891. — Navagiero, Storio Veneziana, XXI. p. 1120. — M. A. Sabellico, Deca III. L. VIII. f. 201

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"Le doge, blessé de trouver constamment un contradicteur et un censeur si amer dans son frère, lui dit un jour en plein conseil: "Messire Augustin, vous faites tout votre possible pour hâter ma mort; vous vous flattez de me succéder; mais, si les autres vous connaissent aussi bien que je vous connais, ils n'auront garde de vous élire." Là-dessus il se le leva, ému del colère, rentra dans son appartement, et mourut quelques jours après. Ce frère, contre le lequel il s'était emporté, fut precisement le successeur qu'on lui donna. C'etait un mérite dont on aimait à tenir compte; surtout à un parent, de s'être mis en opposition avec le chef de la république." * — *Daru, Historie de Venise*, vol. ii. sec, 11, 533.

In Lady Morgan's fearless and excellent work upon "Italy," I perceive the expression of "Rome of the Ocean" applied to Venice. The same phrase occurs in the "Two Foscari." My publisher can vouch for me that the tragedy was written and sent to England some time before I had seen Lady Morgan's work, which I only received on the 16th of August. I hasten, however, to notice the coincidence, and to yield the originality of the phrase to her who first placed it before the public. I am the more anxious to do this, as I am informed (for I have seen but few of the specimens, and those accidentally) that there have been lately brought against me charges of plagiarism. I have also had an anonymous sort of threatening intimation of the same kind, apparently with the intent of extorting money. To such charges I have no answer to make. One of them is ludicrous enough. I am reproached for having formed the description of a shipwreck in verse from the narratives of many *actual* shipwrecks in *prose*, selecting such materials as were most striking. Gibbon makes it a merit in Tasso "to have copied the minutest details of the Siege of Jerusalem from the Chronicles." In me it may be a demerit, I presume: let it remain so. Whilst I have been occupied in defending *Pope's* character, the lower orders of Grub-street appear to have been assailing *mine:* this is as it should be, both in them and in me. One of the accusations in the nameless epistle alluded to is still more laughable: it states seriously that I "received five hundred pounds for writing advertisements for Day and Martin's patent blacking!" This is the highest compliment to my literary powers which I ever received. It states also "that a person has been trying to make acquaintance with Mr. Townsend, a gentleman of the law, who was with me on business in Venice three years ago, for the purpose of obtaining any defamatory particulars of my life from this occasional visiter." Mr. Townsend is welcome to say what he knows. I mention these particulars merely to show the world in general what the *literary* lower world contains, and their way of setting to work. Another charge made, I am told, in the "Literary Gazette," is, that I wrote the notes to "Queen Mab;" a work which I never saw till some time after its publication, and which I recollect showing to Mr. Sotheby as a poem of great power and imagination. I never wrote a line of the notes, nor ever saw them except in their published form. No one knows better than their real author, that his opinions and mine differ materially upon the metaphysical portion of that work; though, in common with all who are not blinded by baseness and bigotry, I highly admire the poetry of that and his other publications.

Mr. Southey, too, in his pious preface to a poem whose blasphemy is as harmless as the sedition of Wat Tyler, because it is equally absurd with that sincere production, calls upon the "legislature to look to it," as the toleration of such writings led to the French Revolution: *not* such writings as Wat Tyler, but as those of the "Satanic School." This is not true, and Mr. Southey knows it to be not true. Every French writer of any freedom was persecuted; Voltaire and Rousseau were exiles, Marmontel and Diderot were sent to the Bastile, and a perpetual war was waged with the whole class by the existing despotism. In the next place the French Revolution was *not* occasioned by any writings whatsoever, but must have occurred had no such writers ever existed. It is the fashion to attribute every thing to the French Revolution, and the French Revolution to every thing but its real cause. That cause is obvious — the government exacted too much, and the people could neither *give* nor *bear more*. Without this, the Encyclopedists might have written their fingers off without the occurrence of a single alteration. And the *English*

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* The Venetians appear to have had a particular turn for breaking the hearts of their Doges: the above is another instance of the kind in the Doge Marco Barbarigo; he was succeeded by his brother Agostino Barbarigo, whose chief merit is above mentioned.

Revolution — (the first, I mean) — what was it occasioned by? The *puritans* were surely as pious and moral as Wesley or his biographer? Acts — acts on the part of government, and *not* writings against them, have caused the past convulsions, and are tending to the future.

I look upon such as inevitable, though no revolutionist; I wish to see the English constitution restored and not destroyed. Born an aristocrat, and naturally one by temper, with the greater part of my present property in the funds, what have *I* to gain by a revolution? Perhaps I have more to lose in every way than Mr. Southey, with all his places and presents for panegyrics and abuse into the bargain. But that a revolution is inevitable, I repeat. The government may exult over the repression of petty tumults; these are but the receding waves repulsed and broken for a moment on the shore, while the great tide is still rolling on and gaining ground with every breaker. Mr. Southey accuses us of attacking the religion of the country; and is he abetting it by writing lives of *Wesley?* One mode of worship is merely destroyed by another. There never was, nor ever will be, a country without a religion. We shall be told of *France* again: but it was only Paris and a frantic party, which for a moment upheld their dogmatic nonsense of theophilanthropy. The church of England, if overthrown, will be swept away by the sectarians, and not by the skeptics. People are too wise, too well-informed, too certain of their own immense importance in the realms of space, ever to submit to the impiety of doubt. There may be a few such diffident speculators, like water in the pale sunbeam of human reason, but they are very few: and their opinions, without enthusiasm or appeal to the passions, can never gain proselytes — unless, indeed, they are persecuted — *that*, to be sure, will increase any thing.

Mr. S. with a cowardly ferocity, exults over the anticipated "death-bed repentance" of the objects of his dislike; and indulges himself in a pleasant "Vision of Judgment," in prose as well as verse, full of impious impudence. What Mr. S.'s sensations or ours may be in the awful moment of leaving this state of existence neither he nor we can pretend to decide. In common, I presume, with most men of any reflection, *I* have not waited for a "death-bed" to repent of many of my actions, notwithstanding the "diabolical pride" which this pitiful renegado in his rancour would impute to those who scorn *him*. Whether upon the whole the good or evil of my deeds may preponderate is not for me to ascertain; but, as my means and opportunities have been greater, I shall limit my present defence to an assertion, (easily proved, if necessary,) that I, "in my degree," have done more real good in any one given year, since I was twenty, than Mr. Southey in the whole course of his shifting and turn-coat existence. There are several actions to which I can look back with an honest pride, not to be damped by the calumnies of a hireling. There are others to which I recur with sorrow and repentance; but the only *act* of *my* life of which Mr. Southey can have any real knowledge, as it was one which brought me in contact with a near connexion of his own, did no dishonour to that connexion nor to me.

I am not ignorant of Mr. Southey's calumnies on a different occasion, knowing them to be such, which he scattered abroad on his return from Switzerland against me and others: they have done him no good in this world, and, if his creed be the right one, they will do less in the next. What *his* "death-bed" may be, it is not my province to predicate: let him settle it with his Maker, as I must do with mine. There is something at once ludicrous and blasphemous in this arrogant scribbler of all work sitting down to deal damnation and destruction upon his fellow-creatures, with Wat Tyler, the Apotheosis of George the Third, and the Elegy on Martin the regicide, all shuffled together in his writing-desk. One of his consolations appears to be a Latin note from a work of a Mr. Landor, the author of "Gebir," whose friendship for Robert Southey will, it seems, "be an honour to him when the ephemeral disputes and ephemeral reputations of the day are forgotten." I for one neither envy him "the friendship," nor the glory in reversion which is to accrue from it, like Mr. Thelusson's fortune in the third and fourth generation. This friendship will probably be as memorable as his own epics, which (as I quoted to him ten or twelve years ago in "English Bards") Porson said "would be remembered when Homer and Virgil are forgotten, and not till then." For the present, I leave him.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

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